

# THE MILITANT

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Washington's 'terror' detentions are an assault on workers' rights

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

As the U.S. armed forces reinforce their positions inside and around Afghanistan, the number of al Qaeda and Taliban fighters they hold in the region and elsewhere has grown to around 450. This is in addition to the thousands imprisoned by Northern Alliance forces, working with U.S. interrogation specialists. The brutal transport and housing conditions imposed on the 100-plus prisoners at Guantanamo naval base in Cuba have become the center of growing controversy.

Despite humiliating treatment, being transported against their will halfway around the world, and being locked in cages on a base illegally occupied by Washington in Cuba, none of the prisoners held by the U.S. government have been charged with any crime.

The treatment of those grabbed in Afghanistan by U.S. authorities is an extension of the assault on workers' rights being carried out by Washington at home.

About the same number of men are behind bars inside the United States, caught up in the "anti-terror" sweep launched four months ago, the largest roundup of foreign nationals since World War II. A number of these people, who are mostly of Middle Eastern descent, have spoken up about the inhumane treatment they have been subjected to. They have also condemned the authorities' trampling over constitutional protections against unreasonable search and seizure and arbitrary imprisonment.

The American Civil Liberties Union's  
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## U.S. military in Philippines targets working people

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

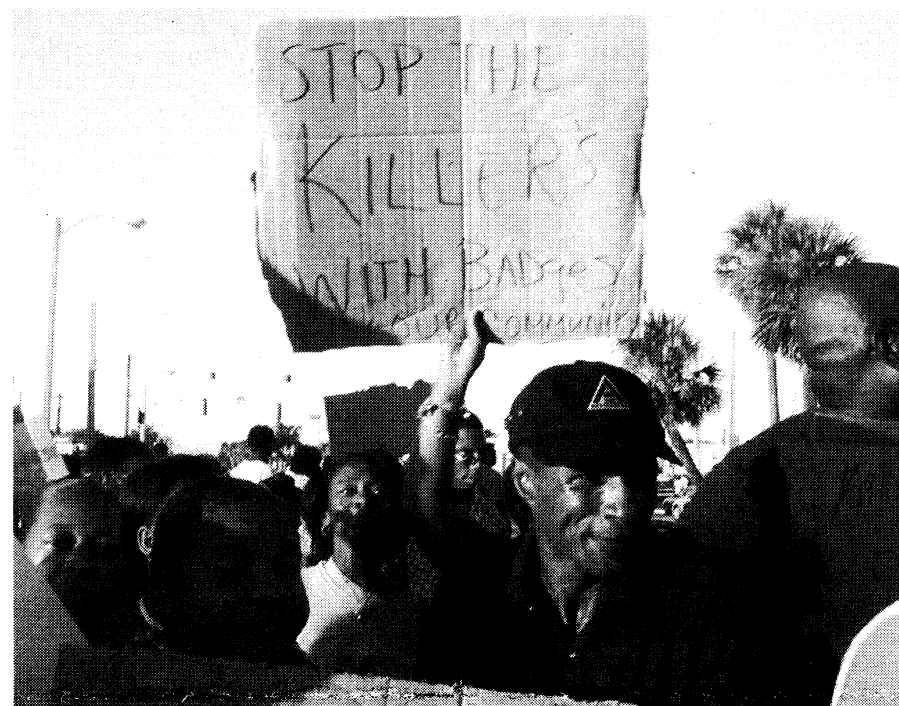
An advance guard of 250 U.S. soldiers has already arrived in the Philippines, paving the way for the largest single deployment of U.S. military might since the Pentagon's ferocious assault on Afghanistan. Around 650 U.S. troops, including 160 Green Berets or special operations forces, are due to arrive there later this month, with the stated aim of conducting months-long exercises with the Philippine army. They will train the army's units in "night helicopter flying, psychological operations, and intelligence work," reported the *New York*

*Times*. The troops will back up army units engaged in offensive operations in the south of the country.

Referring to the Bush administration's "war on terror," which provides the pretext for threats of intervention in Iraq, Somalia, Indonesia, and other countries, the *Times* said the mobilization is a "sign that the Philippines may well become the site of the war's next phase."

While the administration has called the troops "advisers," the real aim of U.S. imperialism was more clearly revealed by Phil  
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## Protests in Miami condemn killing by cop at King Day march



Rally January 2 in Miami to protest killing of Black youth by police officer

BY LARRY TAYLOR

MIAMI—"Stop Killer Cops: Give them 10-20-Life!" This was the chant at a march and protest rally January 22 of more than 400 mostly African American

workers and youth outraged at the latest killing by Miami police of a young Black man, Eddie Lee Macklin, 20, of West Palm Beach during the Martin Luther  
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## Meat packers in Detroit reject bosses' demands

BY OSBORNE HART

DETROIT—Rejecting company take-back demands, members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 876 went on strike and began picketing Dearborn Sausage Co. January 14.

## Fired garment worker wins backing at political events

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

"I've participated in a number of activities this past week as part of the campaign to defend workers' rights and freedom of speech," said Michael Italie in a phone interview with the *Militant*. "On January 18 I attended the AFL-CIO Civil Rights Conference in Miami where I met several members of International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) Local 1422 from Charleston, South Carolina."

The unionists talked about the victory of the Charleston Five in defeating the bosses' frame-up charges that stemmed from an assault in January 2000 by 600 cops on dockworkers who were picketing a non-union outfit. Five workers who had been charged with instigating a riot were held  
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Workers voted down a company contract that included eliminating time-and-a-half pay after eight hours, increasing employee co-payments on health insurance, weakening seniority rights, and other demands.

In a January 17 letter sent to the union, company lawyers threatened that if the union members did not accept the proposed contract, the bosses will "be hiring perma-

nent replacements effective January 21."

Unionists have set up picket lines outside the plant and at an adjacent retail store run by the company. They report that they have turned away many customers who have responded to requests to honor the picket line.

The 57 strikers have also started to win support from other unions. United Auto  
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## 'PM' editor speaks on building a communist leadership in Argentina

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

MIAMI—"We went to Argentina not simply to report for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, but to help build the communist movement," said Martin Koppel in his opening remarks at a Militant Labor Forum here January 19.

"Besides the *Militant* and *PM* we brought with us Pathfinder books and copies of the *New International*, and we sought out workers and young people who are attracted to the perspective of making a revolution," he stated.

Koppel, editor of the Spanish-language *Perspectiva Mundial*, was joined on the platform by Romina Green, a garment worker and organizer of the New York Young Socialists. The two had returned days earlier from a two-week trip to Argentina to report on the social explosion that led to the collapse of the de la Rúa government in December. Christian Catalán from Canada was

part of this team.

The forum, titled "Behind the Social Crisis and Economic Collapse in Argentina," was part of a socialist educational weekend sponsored by the Miami and Tampa Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists. Nearly 30 people participated in the forum on Argentina and two classes the next day, "In defense of workers' rights" and "Bolshevism and Anarchism." Among them were a high school student and three immigrant workers from Argentina. The three—a garment worker, a welder, and a construction worker—noted that there is now a fast-growing Argentine immigrant population in Miami.

The current upheaval in Argentina, Koppel noted, is a sharp example of what capitalism increasingly has in store for working people worldwide, from the debt squeeze in Turkey and stepped-up U.S. mili-  
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# Communists in Australia build base in workers district

BY LINDA HARRIS  
AND ROB GARDNER

SYDNEY, Australia—"I have to visit your bookshop," remarked Ethel-Terra Clotney, a young Ghanaian woman, after purchasing *Thomas Sankara Speaks* and a copy of the *Militant* newspaper from a street-corner book stall in Campsie. "Do you have meetings to discuss these things?" she asked, and promptly signed up to be notified about the weekly Militant Labor Forum series held at the Pathfinder Bookshop.

Since relocating the bookshop to Campsie in September, members of the Communist League and Young Socialists have regularly been setting up tables featuring the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder books and pamphlets in Campsie and nearby Lakemba. Both are vibrant working-class communities that include immigrants from all over the world.

The move coincided with the Australian government launching new attacks on working people seeking refugee status. The campaign by members of the Communist League and Young Socialists against the imperialist war on Afghanistan, which Canberra has backed from the beginning, and in defense of workers' rights has met with an immediate response from people in the area.

Part of this working-class campaign against the imperialists' war was the decision of the league to launch the election campaign of Ron Poulsen, a leader of the Communist League and wharfie (dockworker). The petitioning drive to place Poulsen on the ballot, and the uncompromising stance of the campaign on the side of working people, helped get the two organizations more widely known in the area. Many young immigrant workers became interested in the League's campaign and activities, helping to put the new bookshop on the map.

The communist workers and youth have found that by setting up literature tables on a regular basis they have gotten to know more people who expect to see them there each week. Many of the *Militant* subscriptions sold from the tables during the past months have been to people living in the

area who have previously purchased a single copy of the paper or previously talked with volunteers staffing the book stall.

An important part of raising the profile of the Communist League and the Young Socialists has also been launching the weekly Militant Labor Forum. A number of people attending forums for the first time found out about the events at one of the tables in Campsie. One young Palestinian came across a street stall just an hour before that week's forum. He decided to join the discussion on the outcome of the Australian federal elections and Canberra's war drive. Rosa Garcia, a student originally from El Salvador, stopped by a table one Saturday, buying a copy of the *Militant* and the pamphlet *The Second Declaration of Havana*. The next day she attended a showing of the film *Salt of the Earth* at the forum.

Two co-workers attended another forum that featured a video on the Australian government's attacks on the traditional fishing rights of Indonesian fishermen. One was a wharfie and member of the Maritime Union of Australia at Port Botany, and the other a Nepalese meat packer, who lives in Campsie and comes by the stalls regularly. He also joined a weekly discussion class held at the bookshop on revolutionary perspectives.

Two other examples show the interest in revolutionary ideas among workers and young people in the district. A young Iranian who took the bookshop leaflet from a volunteer at a stall decided to visit the bookshop straight away. He stayed for nearly an hour discussing topics ranging from the Russian revolution to what attracts young people to join the communist movement. He ended up buying a copy of the *Militant* and *New Internationalist* no. 7 containing the article, "The Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq."

A couple from Afghanistan were attracted by a title on the table in Farsi, and then came up to the bookshop to see a wider selection. They suggested advertising the books in one of the local Farsi newsletters.

"Sales have increased in the last three months much more than we had anticipated

## Workers and immigrants in New York demand jobs, legal residency



Above: workers rally in Times Square, New York City, January 16, to demand jobs as promised by employers at the Marriott World Trade Center hotel, which was destroyed on September 11. Left: December 18 meeting in New York at janitors union hall, called to demand legal residency for undocumented workers affected by the events. "Thousands of immigrants have not received assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, social security, or unemployment benefits," said Mexican-born Oscar Rojas, who had worked at the Twin Towers. "We want residency so we can work, travel to our homelands, and visit our loved ones, without fearing to return and lose our lives at the border."

as the Pathfinder bookshop gets to be known in the area," bookshop manager Joanne Kuniansky told the *Militant*.

To help push this interest along, the bookshop launched a sale of surplus stock in December. Some 44 titles—almost \$800 (US\$400) worth—have been sold. The most popular title in the sale has been *Thomas Sankara Speaks* with six copies sold. A Somali worker whose brother-in-law is a new *Militant* subscriber visited one of the weekly literature tables and bought two copies.

Pathfinder supporters who work at a meatpacking plant not far from Campsie have been publicizing the book sale on the job. Sam, a *Militant* subscriber from Ghana who attended the first Militant Labor Forum held at the new bookshop, bought two

titles and helped sell more by showing the "books by Africans" to his friends.

Young Socialists member Alasdair MacDonald bought 22 books and pamphlets, including, as he said, "a great deal on the complete set of *The Communist International in Lenin's Time*. It was an opportunity to build up my personal library."

Recently David Chen, a young worker originally from Beijing, came across the bookshop for the first time and stayed for a three-hour discussion. "These books are so important, I have to let my friends know about this bookshop," he said.

Linda Harris is a member of the Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union.

## Florida death row inmate released

BY MARY ANN SCHMIDT

MIAMI—After serving nearly 18 years on death row, Juan Melendez was released from prison January 3 when prosecutors announced they would not pursue a new trial. Melendez's death sentence was overturned due to the discovery of a confession. The migrant farm worker and Puerto Rican is among a growing number of death row inmates in Florida who have been freed after government frame-ups have unraveled.

Melendez's conviction was scrapped in December by a circuit judge in Hillsborough, Tampa, after he had lost several rounds of appeals and had his death sentence upheld by the Florida Supreme Court. Citing the new testimony and the fact that

information had been withheld from the defense, the judge ruled that the prosecutors would have to try Melendez again if they wanted to keep him in prison.

Melendez was convicted and sentenced to death in 1984 for the murder of Delbert Baker in Baker's Auburndale Beauty Salon a year earlier. At least four confessions to investigators and lawyers by a previous suspect, Vernon James, now deceased, were not presented as evidence.

Two years ago, Roger Alcott, Melendez's lawyer, discovered a key transcript while moving boxes of files in his office. The document records a conversation a month before the trial in which James told investi-

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## THE MILITANT

### U.S. Out of the Philippines

For more than 100 years the U.S. has intervened in the Philippines, waging war to subdue it as a colony, and, after World War II, giving support to brutal, military-based regimes. Working people have an equally long history of resistance to this intervention. The *'Militant'* reports on this struggle. Don't miss a single issue.



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# Rallies in Ireland condemn rightist attacks

BY MARGARET KENNEDY

BELFAST, Northern Ireland—Public service unions staged a half-day strike and tens of thousands joined mass rallies January 18 here, in Derry, and in other cities across the north of Ireland, demanding an end to violence against Catholics and saluting those workers who have stood up to sectarian intimidation. The rallies were called by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU).

Days before, postal workers halted work after the murder of their workmate, Daniel McColgan, who was killed as he arrived for work in Belfast January 12. A rightist organization called the Red Hand Defenders, the name used by the paramilitary wing of the pro-British Ulster Defence Association (UDA), claimed responsibility. The group threatened to kill other Catholic postal workers and teachers.

Hours prior to the killing they had issued a death threat against all workers at Catholic schools. North Belfast has recently been the scene of organized intimidation and violence against Catholic school children and their parents. There have been hundreds of incendiary attacks on Catholic homes forcing many families to move.

The UDA is one of several organizations known as loyalists, who exist to wage terror against Irish Catholics in order to keep Catholics as a second class caste and defend the "union" with Britain. Since July last year loyalists have killed six people, in-



Postal workers joined rally in Belfast January 18 to demand an end to violence by pro-British forces. In solidarity, public service unions staged a half-day strike that day.

cluding a journalist. Dozens of attempted murders took place over the same period.

Postal workers and teachers, who have been the main target of a recent increase in anti-Catholic violence and threats, marched

from their workplaces to the rallies along with health-care workers from several hospitals. They were joined by postal workers from Scotland who came to show their solidarity. On arrival at the town center, crowds

greeted them with applause.

Public transport workers suspended their services and firefighters also mobilized. School students, encouraged by the Minister for Education—Sinn Fein leader Martin McGuinness—took part as well.

Drenching rain and gusty winds did not deter people from turning out to express their abhorrence of bigotry. Mary Cahillane, a primary school teacher, said that people were there "shoulder to shoulder, no matter what religion we are." Several participants remarked that this was the first trade union rally of its kind in decades.

A Belfast hospital worker said he was taking part because, "people have got the right to go to work without people shooting them."

## Demands on London

In an interview January 14, Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams said, "How the British government responds to the threat from the UDA and from its securocrats who are involved with that organization, is a test for that government. Nationalists and republicans see the British response to the UDA as a measure of its seriousness about the peace process."

Noting that few loyalists have ever been arrested for the murders, he said, "It can't be because of a lack of information. The UDA was established by the British, it is an organization that is riddled with British agents, either working for Special Branch or other intelligence services."

After initially criticizing the strike call, pro-British politicians and business representatives announced their support for the rallies. In statements from the platform, union and church leaders worked hard to equally condemn "all paramilitary organizations" for a "cycle of violence," implicating the Irish Republican Army, which led an armed struggle against British rule and has observed a cease-fire since 1997. The two Protestant victims of sectarian murder gangs in 2001 were shot in the mistaken belief that they were Catholics.

Speaking after the rally, Martin McGuinness welcomed the presence of "Protestants, Catholics, and Dissenters. We want to move forward together, live together, and work together," he said.

Irish National Teachers Organisation member Anne Brown Lee stated, "If teachers did not come out today, then we could not, in conscience, come out and demonstrate over any other issue."

## Michigan students: 'Free Rabih Haddad!'

BY PETER THIERJUNG

ANN ARBOR, Michigan—Three hundred students and community residents filled the Michigan Union Ballroom here at the University of Michigan January 16 to protest violations of constitutional rights of Rabih Haddad. The meeting, organized by Students Allied for Freedom and Equality (SAFE), included participation by students and associates of Haddad, Michigan American Civil Liberties Union legal director Michael Steinberg, and U.S. representative Lynn Rivers.

"What's happening to our rights? Who will be next? Justice must prevail. Rabih Haddad will be free," Abdallah Khatib, a high school student who attended Haddad's Islamic studies classes, told the gathering.

Haddad, a Lebanese immigrant who is also a Muslim pastor and community leader, was detained and jailed by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) on December 14 for allegedly overstaying a tourist visa that expired in 1999. He has been held without bond and in solitary confinement.

Several court hearings have been held in secret and no criminal charges have been filed. Evidence against Haddad has not been released and is classified. He has only been allowed to participate in his court hearings via closed-circuit TV from his jail cell.

U.S. federal marshals recently took custody of Haddad and transferred him to a federal facility in Chicago on January 17 at the request of the U.S. attorney for the northern district of Illinois.

Haddad was arrested the same day that FBI, U.S. Treasury, CIA, and NATO agents raided the offices of the Global Relief Foundation, a charity with its international office in the Chicago area. Haddad was a cofounder of the foundation which reportedly raised some \$20 million over the last 10 years for emergency relief, education, and aid to people in 22 countries, including Chechnya, Albania, Jordan, Iraq, and to Palestinians in the territories occupied by Israel.

The U.S. treasury department seized the property of the foundation and froze its assets under provisions of the USA Patriot Act because the government claims there is "reasonable" cause to believe that the foundation was funding "terrorism." But again no evidence to substantiate the allegations has been made public and the government admits it does not have enough evidence to add the foundation to its list of 168 organizations that it claims are directly linked to funding terrorism.

Foundation officials have denied the charges. "If they have the hubris to say what they are saying, they ought to come out and say it and show their evidence and allow us to defend ourselves," foundation attorney Roger Simmons told the *Detroit Metrotimes*.

The government says that Haddad is only being detained because of immigration is-

ssues. Ashraf Nubani, Haddad's attorney, asserts that Haddad is in the United States legally under provisions of immigration law passed in December 2000 and was in the process of filing for permanent residency.

Following the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, the U.S. government detained more than 1,200 immigrants and began conducting interrogations of 5,000 men of mostly Middle Eastern descent. Justice Department officials in Michigan sent letters to more than 500 young Middle Eastern men demanding they set up appointments for interviews to discuss the hijacking.

While Haddad's case is one of hundreds stemming from arrests after September 11, his fight has been gaining in local and national prominence. Supporters have orga-

nized a series of public protests, mobilized for court hearings, won a resolution of support from the Ann Arbor city council, and have pressed public officials to speak out against the violations of constitutional rights.

More than 80 people rallied outside immigration court in Detroit on January 10 for a hearing on Haddad's case. Included among the public barred from the hearing was U.S. representative John Conyers, the ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee. Conyers released a statement calling the government's actions "abusive and unconstitutional."

A deportation hearing for Haddad is set for February 19 in Detroit. Supporters and defenders of constitutional rights are planning to be there.

## Mexican Congress imposes tax on corn syrup

BY RÓGER CALERO

In response to the ongoing trade assault by U.S. imperialism that is devastating the Mexican sugar industry, the Congress in that country has levied a 20 percent tax on soft drinks made with corn syrup. The new tax, approved on January 1, had an immediate impact on U.S. producers of the syrup, and received a negative response from Washington.

With the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994, owners of sugar mills in Mexico expected they would be able to export an estimated 500,000 tons of excess sugar tariff-free to the United States. But Washington unilaterally imposed a "side letter" to the "free-trade" act to protect the U.S. sugar manufacturers. The protectionist measure, which was criticized last September by the Mexican government, has limited sugar exports to the U.S. to 116,000 tons a year.

### Lucrative business

At the same time, U.S. companies shipped some 1.3 million tons of corn-derived fructose into Mexico between 1994 and the end of 2000. In the last year alone U.S.-based Archer Daniels Midland and Corn Products International sold a total of 475,000 metric tons, worth \$240 million, to bottling companies in Mexico. Corn Products had established four plants in Mexico to take advantage of the lucrative market.

Mexico's sugar industry, which employs close to half a million workers, including small cane growers, mill workers and truck drivers, is vital to the economy of 227 municipalities in 15 states. The flooding of the Mexican market with the cheaper corn sweetener threatened the sugar industry with collapse.

As the crisis deepened the mills stopped paying peasants for cane they had already

delivered. The bosses blamed their inability to export sugar and the declining national market on the rising imports from the north.

Last year, sugar cane workers and peasant growers began to organize marches and rallies in front of government buildings. They threatened to shut down ports and highways, demanding payment for their crops and government protection from the effects of unequal competition and low prices in the international market.

In September the Mexican government carried out a multibillion dollar bailout of 27 sugar mills in order to rescue capitalist investors and stave off the growing protests.

"Given the economic situation of the country, it was more important to maintain the industry, which is a large source of employment," said Mexican sugar baron Rodolfo Perdomo Bueno to the *New York Times* last December. "We would be talking about an uprising in 15 different states" if it were to collapse, he said.

A town official from Córdoba, in the state of Veracruz, said that if the United States refuses to buy Mexico's sugar surplus "they'll have to accept more Mexicans crossing the border."

### U.S. producer closes Mexican plant

Faced with the unexpected tax and a resulting decline in orders, Corn Products said it would suspend operations of one of its plants in Mexico. The company's shares dropped almost 10 percent on the New York Stock Exchange.

U.S. trade representative spokesperson Richard Mills said on January 14 that "our initial reaction is very negative.... Mexico must end this discriminatory treatment of soft drinks made with corn syrup."

Kyd Brenner, the acting director of the Corn Refiners Association, said that many in the capitalist outfit were "shocked" at the

"sudden and dramatic taking of a market."

The U.S. government had earlier won a ruling in the World Trade Organization against a 1997 import duty on corn syrup imposed by the Mexican government. A few weeks prior to the Mexican Congress's latest decision, U.S. government officials had said they would not seek sanctions against Mexico in the earlier case, claiming they would seek to negotiate instead. "This [tax] rejects the good faith step the U.S. took last month," said Mills. Representatives for sugar monopolies in the U.S. have threatened that they may retaliate against the latest measure.

### Divisions in Mexican ruling class

There are also divisions in the Mexican ruling class over how to proceed. Deputies from Mexico's former-ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party, which backed the measure, followed it with full-page ads boasting of their efforts to protect the sugar industry.

Arturo Hervis Reyes, a congressman from the opposition Democratic Revolution Party, said the "fundamental idea of the tax isn't so much to create tax revenue, but to promote the consumption of the nation's sugar. It is a protectionist measure."

Fearful of the impact of the measure on trade relations with the United States, on the other hand, Mexican president Vicente Fox responded unfavorably to the tax, and has announced he will send his finance minister to meet with U.S. officials to discuss the issue.

Jack Rodney from the American Sugar Alliance summed up the imperialists' attitude when he told the *Times*, "It's none of our business how Mexico sorts out its social and economic issues. The part we are concerned about continues to be the surplus sugar—and that we not be expected to pay the price for those problems."

# Colorado students face frame-up bomb case

BY JEREMY ROSE  
AND JASON ALESSIO

CRAIG, Colorado—Three students at Moffat County High School (MCHS), in this northwest Colorado coal mining and ranching town of 9,000 were arraigned January 8 on felony charges of "conspiracy to commit first degree murder" and participating in "terrorist training activities."

Two of the three youths, Tony Jacob, 16, and Tom Elam, 15, have been held in Grand Mesa Youth Services Center in Grand Junction, Colorado, since their arrests on December 21 in connection with an alleged plot to bomb MCHS and the Moffat County Courthouse. Jacob has also been charged with felony stalking. Bail has been set at \$50,000 each.

The third youth, Stephen Jackman, 17, was released on a \$5,000 bond January 14 into the custody of his father in Lyman, Wyoming. Judge Joel Thompson ruled that Jackman did not pose the same threat to himself or the community as the other two.

No political or other motivations have been alleged by those making these accusations. The results of a psychological examination are being used against Elam, who is said to have a "fascination with explosives." Allegations stemming from suspensions from schools in Nebraska and Kansas are being used against Jacob, even though no criminal charges were ever pressed against him in those cases.

## A product of hysteria

This case is a product of hysteria by school officials and cops since the 1999 massacre at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, which has deepened since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in New York and Washington.

MCHS principal Jane Krogman explained that the charges grew out of a smaller incident when one of the three students was suspended December 21 for having a pocketknife at school. School administrators then began cooking up "an investigation of possible violence in the school."

The cops called in bomb-sniffing dogs from a nearby Air Force base when their search of the school turned up no evidence of a bomb. However, in this climate of hysteria, this failed to allay some parental fears.

Two of the youths were arrested at the school after another student claimed to have been threatened and complained to a school patrol officer, who in turn reported the allegation to school officials.

Thompson bound this case together with two others against Elam, who faces a probation revocation hearing stemming from a felony conviction in 2000 for possession of explosives when he brought gunpowder to school, and a criminal mischief case that has not yet gone to trial.

Norm Townsend, attorney for Elam, argued, "There is simply no plot, simply no evidence of a plot, no evidence of bomb-making equipment or materials."

Townsend said that a video game that allowed players to build virtual cities and battle one another over the Internet, a game that was played by several MCHS students, was the basis of this case. Townsend also pointed out that another juvenile in Craig, who was recently convicted of possession of explosives, is presently at home with an ankle monitor.

No charges of possessing explosive materials or actual criminal acts of violence have been filed in this case. The only charges filed are for violating thought-control statutes of "conspiracy" and "training." Some local residents have mentioned concerns that the arrests were made for what the three said and thought and not for what they actually did.

Under examination at a January 14 hearing, Student Resource Officer Bridgit Camilletti even admitted the cops had not found any evidence of bomb making materials or equipment, but said the investigation is not complete, and that further evidence—such as what Elam might have been buying over the Internet with his father's credit card—was still being "researched and collected," another way of saying they are still concocting a frame-up.

Following pre-expulsion hearings at Moffat County High School the next day, Interim Superintendent Peter Bergmann announced he is recommending to the school board the three be expelled based largely on the police report.

The *Craig Daily Press* quoted the mother of one of the youths as saying people who

knew the boys "could see the boys maybe spouting off and saying something stupid, but not doing something like that. The police overreacted."

The climate of hysteria claimed scientific research as a victim in Kiowa, Colorado, near the center of the state, in recent days when a teacher was suspended and a 15-

year-old student could still face criminal charges stemming from a science fair project on how bombs work. The device in the exhibit was not capable of exploding and posed no threat to anyone.

Meanwhile, in Littleton the parents of Daniel Rohrbough, who was killed at Columbine High School, have been seek-

ing an inquest into their son's death. Brian Rohrbough and Sue Patrone say they have evidence that cops killed their son, not Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold.

*Jason Alessio is an underground coal miner and a member of United Mine Workers of America Local 1984.*

## Teacher's right to oppose U.S. war becomes issue in Florida high school

BY REBECCA ARENSON

NAPLES, Florida—"I don't feel teachers shed their First Amendment right to free speech when they enter the classroom," explained Angela Andriesse, a first-year English teacher at Lely High School here during a picket line of several dozen people calling on Washington to end its war against Afghanistan.

The protest was also organized to defend the rights of Ian Harvey, a mass media and English teacher at Lely who is under fire for expressing his views opposing the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan. "I try to get my kids to speak up for themselves and it's important for them to see that their teacher does that," said Andriesse at the January 13 demonstration.

In early December Harvey wrote a letter to the editor of the *Naples Daily News* stating his opinion opposing U.S. military intervention and inviting others to join the picket line he was helping to organize with students and community activists for December 9.

The picket line, held at a main intersection in the city, was met by a counter-demonstration organized by the Vietnam Veterans of America. Although outnumbered, the protesters, made up largely of high school students, stood their ground in the face of the much older hostile crowd sporting American flags.

Jerry Sanford, one of several retired firefighters at the counterdemonstration, asserted in a statement to the local newspaper that Harvey "stands in front of the classroom teaching this garbage. If he doesn't like it here, have him go back to London. I was at Ground Zero and we all knew many of the fellow firefighters that were killed September 11." Another retired firefighter said

Harvey "should be fired. If it's true that he's not an American citizen, how is something like this allowed?" School board member Linda Abbott attended the rally on the side of the counterprotesters.

Local police stood by as prowar people circled and walked through the antiwar picket. Soon after, Collier County Schools Superintendent Dan White launched an official investigation into what they call Harvey's "teaching practices."

According to the January 11 *Naples Daily News*, Allun Hamblett, executive director of human resources, said he is "investigating whether Harvey went beyond the curriculum by giving his own opinions, placed unwarranted pressure on students to conform to his opinions, contacted students after school via e-mail, and favored students who espoused his point of view."

The *Naples Daily News* also made reference to Harvey's immigration status in at least two articles. The teacher is a citizen of the United Kingdom, a legal resident, and a tenured teacher with 11 years in the school district.

Harvey learned he was under investigation when students began reporting to him that they had been questioned by the principal and Peter DeBaun, the Collier County School District investigator.

"I got called down from Algebra 2 class to talk about Mr. Harvey," explained Amanda Woodward, a junior at Lely High. "I was asked what Mr. Harvey's mass media class was about and if he talked about the war. He asked me if I knew that there were going to be counterprotesters at the demonstration, trying to make it seem like Mr. Harvey put us in danger. I said of course I knew there would be. Everyone knows if

you have a protest the other side will want to say what they think," she said. "He told me not to talk to anyone, not even to Mr. Harvey because our conversation was confidential between me, him, and the principal. So, right after I went and told everything to Mr. Harvey."

In late December Harvey was questioned for five hours by school official Peter Debaun but there have yet to be any charges filed. Harvey has only been told he is under investigation and that a decision will likely be made by the end of the month.

Debaun "wanted to know some information about my class like what I had my students read and if I was presenting all sides of the issues," Harvey said. "But most of his questioning was focused on what I do outside of the classroom. He wanted to know what protests and activities I had been involved in."

Robert Malenchek, a former student at Lely High, said he thinks Harvey "has the right to freedom of speech. It's also brainwashing to always say that this war is good. Students should be able to decide for themselves what they think."

Kelly Russell, the mother of a ninth grade English student of Harvey's, came to the January 13 protest to show support for the embattled teacher. "I think Mr. Harvey was offering a healthy environment for free thought and discussion. I think that's what education is about. In reviewing what Mr. Harvey stands for, I don't necessarily agree with everything, but I think he tries to get his students to think a little bit. Isn't that what we want our youth to be doing?"

The controversy has been a lead story in the local media. A school board hearing on the matter is scheduled for January 24.

## Steelworkers fired in Quebec after walkout



Picket line at Mométal, steel plant near Montreal. Workers walked out November 6 to oppose victimization of union official. The company fired 128 strikers, who have mounted daily pickets in effort to defend the union.

### Continued from Page 16

"also contributed to the antiunion atmosphere in the plant." There have been some 30 serious work accidents in the plant in the last 18 months.

Of the 128 workers who remain active in the strike today, about 50 were hired since the 1999-2000 strike. "These new hires have come to appreciate the union," explained Ariete, "because the gains we made through the last strike also benefited them. They have a lot of confidence in the more experienced union members and have learned that what we need to defend the union is solidarity."

Fifteen workers have crossed the picket line since the walkout. Despite the many job notices the company has placed in area newspapers, only a dozen workers have been hired.

Hearings on contempt of court charges, which could lead to fines and prison sentences against union leaders, have been postponed until March 27. The company has also submitted a grievance against the union, claiming compensatory damages of Can\$42,000 a day for lost production.

The strikers have received financial support from several unions affiliated to the

CSN in the area.

Messages of solidarity and financial contributions should be sent to: Mométal (CSN), Fédération de la métallurgie, Conseil central de la Montérégie, 5110 Boul. Cousineau, bureau 200, St-Hubert, Quebec, J3Y 7G5.

*Yannick Duguay is a student at Laval University in Quebec City and a member of the Young Socialists. Sylvie Charbin is a sewing machine operator and a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.*



# Garment worker wins backing at events

Continued from front page

under house arrest for more than 18 months. After a nearly two-year defense campaign the prosecution was forced to drop the felony riot charges brought against them and settled for a plea agreement on minor charges and no jail time. "The ILA members at the civil rights conference said their union is defending 27 other workers who face lesser charges related to the police attack," said Italie.

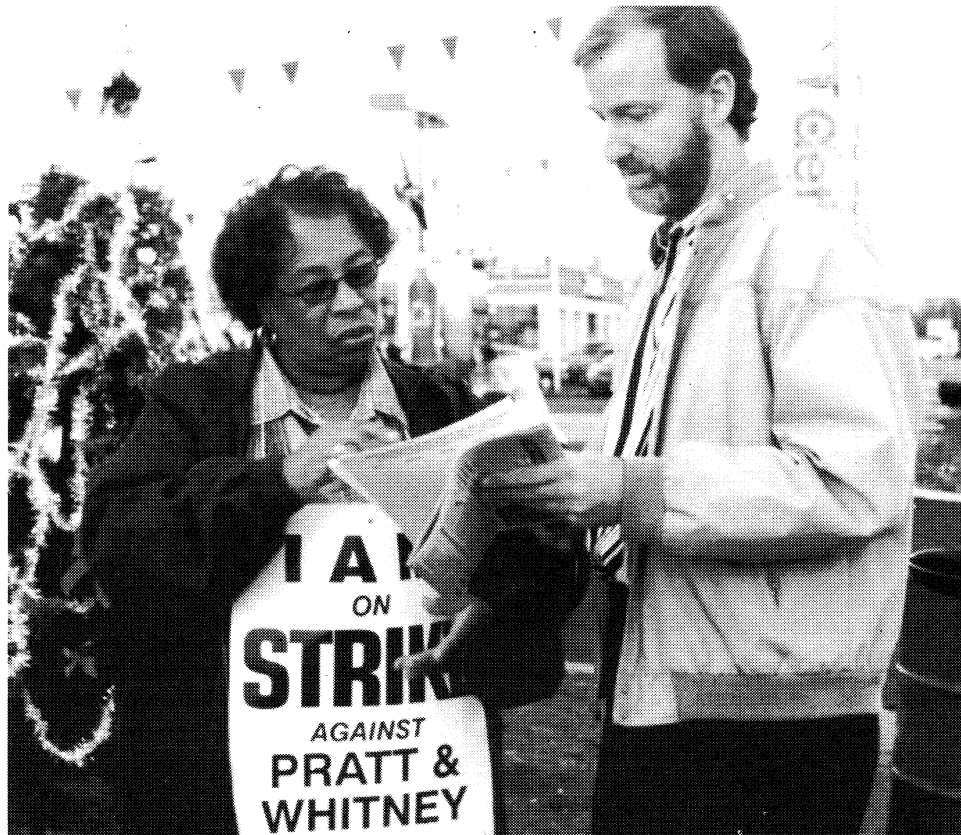
Italie, a garment worker, said he spoke with ILA members and other unionists about being firing from his job at Goodwill Industries last October for comments he made as the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Miami during a televised debate, condemning Washington's war against Afghanistan and defending the Cuban Revolution. "Tomorrow I and other supporters of the campaign will be in Charleston where we will staff a literature table at the ILA union hall. I will also meet with Kenneth Riley, president of ILA Local 1422."

Italie said he met several workers and officials who were members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). "One of them is a UNITE local president in New Jersey who identified with my case," he said. "She has a disabled daughter who has been mistreated by government and private agencies."

Later in the day after attending the AFL-CIO conference, Italie joined a rally of 200 people demanding the release of 187 jailed Haitian immigrants who have applied for asylum in the United States. They are being detained despite interviews with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) authorities concluding that they have a credible fear of persecution if they went back to Haiti. "Normally immigrants who reach that step in applying for asylum are released pending a hearing with the INS," said Italie, who spoke at the event, which also included Linda Chavez-Thompson, AFL-CIO executive vice president; Fred Frost, president of the South Florida AFL-CIO; and Marleine Dastiene, a leader of Haitian Women of Miami.

Italie said he told the rally that "after September 11 the Bush administration has been carrying out a war against Afghanistan and workers' rights. The U.S. rulers are making immigrants a special target to divide and weaken the labor movement. That's why they go after Haitians, Arabs, and other immigrants."

Italie told the *Militant*, "The treatment of POWs at the Guantanamo naval base is one more example of the hypocrisy of the U.S. government, which portrays itself as a defender of human rights while treating prisoners in a humiliating and degrading fashion. The intent is to intimidate those who go up against U.S. imperialism. The real targets are not the prisoners in Guantanamo,



As part of his tour, Italie met with unionists in North Carolina involved in the defense of five dockworkers framed-up on charges of instigating a riot. Above, Italie visits workers on strike against Pratt and Whitney in Hartford, Connecticut, last December.

but workers and farmers in the United States and around the world. The detention camp is also an affront to the sovereignty of Cuba, whose territory is being used by Washington to hold and abuse prisoners."

The day after the Haitian rights protest Italie said he spoke at a demonstration of 300 people at McDill Air Force Base in Tampa in opposition to the war in Afghanistan and the U.S. government's assault on civil liberties. Another speaker at the protest was Ian Harvey, a high school teacher in Naples, Florida, who has come under fire

for organizing antiwar actions that included some of his students.

"Later that night I went to St. Petersburg, Florida, where the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) held their awards banquet," said Italie. "Before the event I talked to Fred Shuttlesworth, the keynote speaker, who reaffirmed his support for my case. The chairperson of the program, Florida State SCLC president Sevil Brown, acknowledged my presence and the free speech fight to the audience."

Italie said the next event on his itinerary

## Professor fights planned dismissal

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

TAMPA, Florida—"We're going to win this fight," said Sami Al-Arian as he kicked off a January 14 press conference here to announce his campaign to prevent the University of South Florida (USF) from firing him for his political beliefs. Some 40 supporters of Al-Arian, a tenured professor of computer science and engineering, joined him at the press conference, which was covered by several TV stations and much of the print media here. This fight has gained national attention as a symbol of resistance to the anti-Arab, anti-Muslim hysteria pro-

moted by the Bush administration's "war on terrorism" and attacks on civil liberties.

The threatened firing of Al-Arian, a Palestinian, and longtime supporter of the fight for self-determination of the Palestinian people, was sparked by the September 26 television program "The O'Reilly Factor," on which he appeared. Host Bill O'Reilly charged Al-Arian with being responsible for USF being "a hotbed for Islamic militants," and said, "If I was the CIA I'd follow you wherever you went. I'm saying I'd be your shadow, doctor." The USF administration

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## Protests in Miami condemn killing by cop

Continued from front page

King Day parade the previous evening.

On January 21 at 6:30 p.m., as the King Day festival was drawing to a close, Miami-Dade special unit plainclothes officers assigned to patrol the event swarmed a supposedly stolen Lincoln Continental.

In front of a large crowd, Officer James Johns jumped onto the hood of the automobile and fired several bullets through its windshield, killing Macklin, the driver inside. Johns has been placed on paid administrative leave while the shooting is investigated.

"I was there at the Dr. King march," said Soneta Bethel, a 33-year Miami resident. "The cop stopped his car, got out and ran over to the boy's car, jumped on the hood, pulled out his gun, and shot him in the head through the windshield."

The protest was organized the following day by members of the community and various Black rights organizations. By 9:30 a.m. they were on the street corner passing out fliers and holding signs reading, "Come Rally Against The Killer Cops!"

The speak-out early that evening at the Joseph Caleb Center was organized by the Miami-Dade County Community Relations Board. The meeting included a panel of pastors, city commissioners, and the director of the Miami-Dade Police Department.

The police representatives and some city commissioners received overwhelmingly negative responses from the crowd as they attempted to defend the conduct of the of-

ficer responsible for the shooting. "There's all these educated people up there on the panel, but they can't come up with any solutions," said Bethel after the event.

"We want some justice! If Black folks kill a cop they get death row," said Cynthia Flemming, a Miami resident. "We want equal rights! They do anything they want. They're trained to kill!"

Shownda Smith, a resident of Liberty City, added, "That cop wasn't in any danger. It was bumper-to-bumper traffic with all these people around. The cop had time to think. He didn't have to shoot anybody. Now he'll sit behind a desk for a while and continue to get paid."

Robert Green, a 32-year-old barber, left the meeting when the police commissioner tried to answer why there are so many "jump-outs" in the Black community. "What he is saying we don't want to hear," said Green. "The police shouldn't be here. They're the problem. They do 'jump-outs' in our neighborhood all the time. They drive around in cars like you and me, dressed like you and me, and jump people."

D.C. Clarke, a firefighter from the city of Opa-Locka who was recently suspended from his job for refusing to fly the U.S. flag on his fire truck following the September 11 events, also spoke. "The original Constitution considered us three-fifths of a man. They still think of us as three-fifths of a man. They expect us to rant and rave for about a week and then things will go back to nor-

mal. But things aren't going to go back to normal. They're going to have to get it right this time. We're tired of these shows, when our leaders try to tell us to be quiet!"

Another protest march is scheduled for January 25.

## Florida death row inmate released

Continued from Page 2

gators that he had killed Baker and that Melendez was not present. At the time of the trial James took the Fifth Amendment and refused to testify.

There was no physical evidence linking Melendez to the murder, only the accounts of two witnesses. The jury did not hear other testimony that would have cast doubt on these witnesses' statements.

Hardy Pickard, the Polk State prosecutor, withheld interview notes, police reports, and other potentially damaging information from the defense, including evidence that would have undermined the witnesses' credibility. Pickard also misled the jury, stating that a key witness had nothing to gain from testifying, when in fact he had struck a deal to reduce his own prison time in exchange for his testimony.

According to testimony in the Hillsborough Circuit Court, Polk County prosecutors had a practice of issuing secret subpoenas that hid evidence from the defense. The Auburndale police apparently

was staffing an information table at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte and then a dinner meeting with Ahmad Daniels, who was fired from his job as director of the Mecklenburg County Office of Minority Affairs for stating his political views in a local newspaper. Daniels and Italie are scheduled speakers at a meeting on the UNCC campus sponsored by the Campus Greens and the Committee to Defend Freedom of Speech and the Bill of Rights.

To arrange speaking engagements for Michael Italie in your area, please send proposed dates and events planned to the Committee to Defend Freedom of Speech and the Bill of Rights, P.O. Box 510127, Miami, FL, 33151-0127. Tel: (305) 724-5965 or E-mail: DefendFreeSpeech@yahoo.com

## Miners union local: 'a blatant assault on rights'

Lawrence Oliver, president of United Mine Workers of America Local 1332 in Gallup, New Mexico, sent the following letter to the Committee to Defend Freedom of Speech and the Bill of Rights.

The United Mine Workers of America, Local 1332, District 22, at its meeting on January 17, 2002, approved to endorse Michael Italie's fight to defend his constitutional right, freedom to free speech and civil liberties.

The local union speaks out against the injustices placed on working families. Mistreatment by Goodwill Industries hits the core of our democratic society and is a blatant and immoral assault on our constitutional rights.

### Mike Italie National Tour Schedule

#### January 26

Peoples Tribunal—Valdosta, Georgia  
Tel: (404) 753-5484

#### January 29

San Francisco, California. 7:00 p.m. at Quaker Meeting House, 65 9th St., downtown. Speakers include Mike Italie; Denise Alvarado, Puerto Rican solidarity activist; John Fogarty, Irish American Unity Conference. Tel: (678) 521-1055

#### January 30

SEIU Local 1877 Union Hall, 1010 Ruff St. Donation: \$5. Speakers include: Mike Italie; Alia Atawneh, Palestinian fighting against political firing from Macy's Department Store; Jose Sandoval, immigrant rights activist; Rick Trujillo, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 265; Dave Wald, *Infomed* and Cuba solidarity activist. Tel: (408) 377-9443.

#### Jan. 31-Feb. 2

Seattle, Washington. (206) 729-5419

#### February 3-4

Vancouver, British Columbia

wrote the reports months after the incident.

Melendez's appellate lawyer Martin McClain said, "The system is not premised on the notion that the prosecutor wants to win, but that he wants justice to be done. The way this was done is not consistent with that notion."

Melendez's case offers hope for another Death Row inmate, Bill Kelley, who was convicted of murder in 1984 in a trial prosecuted by Pickard. The case is currently under review by federal court in Fort Lauderdale. Kelley's lawyers have argued that Pickard withheld information from the jury showing that a key witness had been offered immunity in exchange for testimony.

Since 1973, 99 death row prisoners have been exonerated and freed in the United States. Of the 3,700 death row inmates, 373, or 10 percent are in Florida, the third highest after Texas and Virginia. Twenty-four have been released from death row in Florida since the reintroduction of the death penalty in 1981, while 51 have been executed.

# Building communist leadership in Argentina

Continued from front page

tary intervention in the Philippines to the economic crisis in the imperialist countries, underscored recently by the collapse of the Enron corporation and its shock waves.

In Argentina today, working people confront record unemployment, brutal social cutbacks, and police assaults on protesting workers. The recent devaluation of the Argentine peso is leading to a further sharp drop in the income of working people.

"There is substantial working-class resistance to these brutal conditions. And we found many workers and youth there who are thirsty for revolutionary answers," Koppel stated. "But what's needed is working-class leadership: a party that can lead working people to chart a path to take power out of the hands of the Argentine ruling families, break free from imperialist domination, and establish a workers and farmers government that can open the road to socialism. This is what we went to talk to people about."

## Peronism: main obstacle for workers

Politics in Argentina today cannot be understood without looking at the unfolding of the historic currents in the workers movement over the years, Koppel pointed out. Today, he said, the main obstacle to working people in Argentina building a revolutionary leadership remains Peronism, a bourgeois current that has dominated politics there since World War II.

"This obstacle was not inevitable, however," he added. The main current in the working-class movement prior to World War II was the Argentine Communist Party. This Stalinist party betrayed the working class leading up to and during World War II. Faithfully carrying out the foreign policy dictates of the ruling bureaucratic caste in Moscow, it backed the war efforts of Argentina's main imperialist oppressor—the United Kingdom—and its ally in Washington. The Communist Party opposed strikes by packing-house and other workers in order to "aid the war effort." Such treachery discredited the CP among militant workers.

The Stalinists thus handed the banner of national liberation to the bourgeois nationalist current around Juan Domingo Perón, which was able to divert the potential revolutionary struggles of workers and farmers into pro-capitalist channels.

Argentine capitalists had been able to take advantage of the war between imperialist rivals, selling them meat and raking in high profits. This allowed them to make substantial concessions to the working class. Under Perón, appointed minister of labor by a military junta and then elected president in 1946, workers organized massively into unions and won significant increases in wages and social benefits. During the post-war boom, working people attributed the fruits of their struggles to Perón and his wife Eva, who posed as a champion of the dispossessed and defender of "the Argentine nation." The leadership of the powerful industrial unions, affiliated to the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), became subordinated and completely tied to Perón and his Justicialist Party.

Since that time, the Argentine labor movement has been marked by the contradiction between the militancy of the rank and file and the class-collaborationist union bureaucracy that has tied the unions to the Peronist party and the capitalist state.

With the end of the postwar boom, Perón was overthrown in a military coup. Workers and their organizations suffered blows but were not defeated.

In 1969, a working-class uprising against the military regime took place in Córdoba, the country's center of auto and aerospace production. Similar revolts took place in the industrial center of Rosario, and then in a number of other cities—except the country's capital, Buenos Aires.

The *Cordobazo*, as it became known, opened up a prerevolutionary situation in Argentina, at a time when working-class upsurges swept through several South American countries. "With proper leadership, a struggle for power by workers and farmers throughout the country could have been posed," Koppel pointed out.

To defuse the mass upsurge, the military announced elections that took place in 1973, and the Peronists won decisively.

During this period, class-struggle-minded currents began to grow in the union movement, seeking to challenge the pro-employer



Militant/Romina Green

Members of Ceramics Workers Union from Zanón tile factory in Neuquén, Argentina, participating in January 7 march to protest the government's antilabor policies.

course of the Peronist bureaucracy. Various organizations identifying themselves as socialist or communist were active in the labor movement. Among them was a small Marxist current that received a hearing from many vanguard workers.

In face of the obstacle of Peronism and the treachery of Stalinism, however, "thousands of revolutionary-minded youth and workers turned toward an ultraleft course," Koppel said. "They were inspired by the Cuban Revolution but misapplied its lessons. Rejecting the perspective of building a revolutionary party of workers rooted in its struggles and mass organizations, they elevated the method of guerrilla warfare to a political strategy, believing it possible for a small group to spark the masses into action through bold but isolated deeds." Prominent among these groups were the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) and the Montoneros, a group arising out of Peronism that used socialist language.

"This ultraleft sectarian course led to disastrous results," Koppel emphasized. "Workers and farmers were increasingly relegated to the sidelines by this strategy. And as the ruling class unleashed a brutal repression, thousands of courageous revolutionaries were slaughtered."

He pointed out that the lessons of that experience are drawn in the Pathfinder book *The Leninist Strategy of Party Building: The Debate on Guerrilla Warfare in Latin America* by U.S. Socialist Workers Party leader Joseph Hansen. It was one of a number of books on sale during the socialist educational weekend.

The Argentine rulers responded with a bloody military coup in 1976. Under the U.S.-backed dictatorship, some 30,000 workers, students, and others were "disappeared." Thousands more were imprisoned or forced into exile. It took years for the working class to recover from these blows.

## Antilabor offensive in 1990s

In 1989, after a transition to bourgeois democratic rule, the Peronists were voted in again, with Carlos Menem becoming president. What followed was a decade of massive selloffs of most basic industries and utilities to foreign investors and an accelerated penetration by imperialist finance capital. The capitalist owners of these industries began large-scale layoffs, leading to sharply increased unemployment and speedup on the job. The General Confederation of Labor (CGT), which supported Menem, went along with these attacks, Koppel said.

"We visited Neuquén province," Koppel said, "a center of the oil industry. Workers' living standards there have been devastated by layoffs over the past decade. But above all, they have been devastated by the union bureaucracy's policy of depending on the government for jobs, pensions, and a secure future."

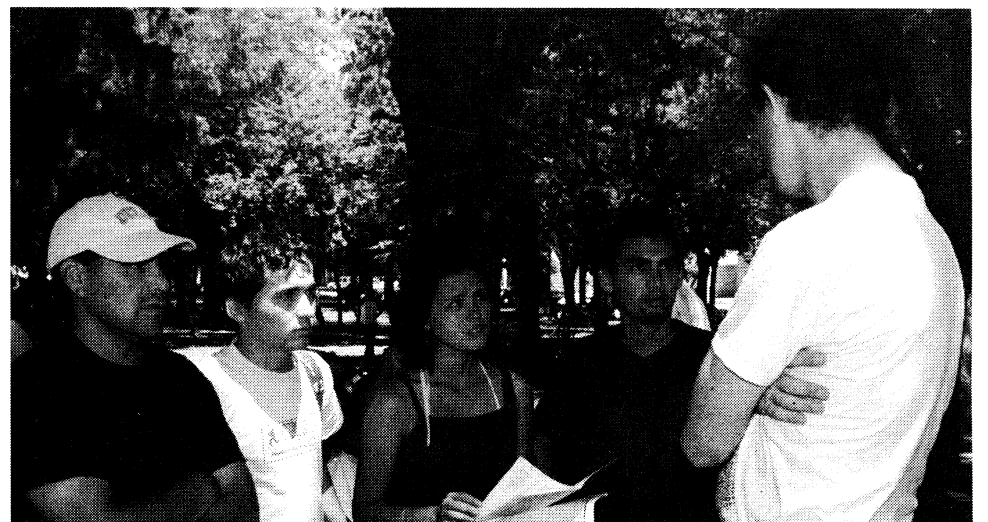
Incapable of responding to the capitalist assault, the CGT fractured. There are now two CGTs and the smaller Argentine Workers Federation (CTA), all of which have a class-collaborationist leadership. Meanwhile, the level of unionization has dropped rapidly. Today, only 20 percent of the workers are organized in trade unions, down from 90 percent at the postwar high point, Koppel stated.

For years, the working class in Argentina

was marked by fear from the legacy of the military terror and then from the threat of unemployment. Social explosions, however, began to break out in mid-1990s, especially in the provinces hardest hit by the social crisis. Workers who were jobless or had not been paid in months revolted in Santiago del Estero, Neuquén, Jujuy, Salta, and elsewhere.

Meanwhile, Argentina's foreign debt has mushroomed to more than \$140 billion. Capitalists in the United States, Britain, Spain, and other imperialist countries use Argentina's debt bondage to suck billions of dollars in wealth out of that country, as they do throughout the semicolonial world. To pay those bondholders, Argentina's rulers have slashed wages of public employees, pensions, and driven down working conditions.

"While nearly 20 percent of the labor force is unemployed and even more are underemployed, many workers told us that 12-hour workdays have become normal," Koppel said. "On-the-job injuries have risen sharply



Militant/Romina Green

Militant reporter Martín Koppel (right) speaks with youth from University of Comahue who came to show solidarity with unemployed workers camped out in Neuquén.

because of speedup." Through so-called reform labor laws, which the union officialdom largely consented to, many previous gains of the labor movement have been set back. *Militant* reporters found it's not uncommon for new hires to undergo job probation of one or even two years, Koppel stated.

## Downfall of de la Rúa regime

Fernando de la Rúa, a Radical Party politician who won the 1999 elections from the Peronists in an alliance with another bourgeois party, Frepaso, obediently carried out the demands of the imperialist bondholders and native capitalists to squeeze more and more from Argentine workers and farmers. In recent months, however, de la Rúa's government defaulted on part of the foreign debt because it simply could not keep up with the interest payments. At the same time, the policy instituted by the Menem government of pegging the peso to the dollar became increasingly unsustainable as the peso in practice lost value in relation to the U.S. currency.

The unions, which had carried out several nationwide strikes against the de la Rúa regime, launched another general strike December 13.

A wave of working-class protests exploded across the country—road blockades

by unemployed workers, demonstrations by unionists demanding back wages, the storming of supermarkets by crowds of unemployed workers. Small businessmen and professionals threatened by financial ruin joined in the street protests. And this time mass demonstrations erupted in Buenos Aires. After his declaration of a state of siege and unleashing of deadly police violence sparked even more popular anger, he was forced to resign December 20.

"This was the working class anarchically defending itself, with little organization, no leadership, and no clear demands except immediate relief," Koppel stated. In Buenos Aires, the unions and parties that call themselves socialist or communist were virtually absent from the big mobilizations.

After the resignations of three more presidents in less than two weeks, the Argentine ruling class picked Peronist leader Eduardo Duhalde, former governor of Buenos Aires province, as president. Duhalde has used traditional Peronist demagoguery to try to dampen the social protests and has put together a Peronist-dominated coalition government together with Radical politicians. His government has implemented a devaluation of the peso, which will have a disastrous impact on the living standards of working people, and is preparing a new round of economic attacks on working people to meet the demands of the imperialist creditors.

## Need for proletarian leadership

"The eruption of social protests and the downfall of the de la Rúa government has opened up greater political discussion and debate among working people in Argentina," Koppel said. "But there is no political current offering proletarian leadership in Argentina today."

Street rallies, pot-banging demonstrations, strikes, and other protests continue to take place daily across the country, demanding relief from the economic catastrophe. But these diverse actions involve different class forces and dynamics.

On one hand, struggles such as demands for payment of back wages, for jobs, or

against police brutality, which have been taking place from Neuquén to Córdoba to Jujuy, can help strengthen the confidence of working people in their own capacities.

"But demonstrations that simply demand 'Out with the corrupt politicians' or denunciations of 'all political parties' do not advance the interests of working people," he said. "Just being antigovernment is not progressive and will feed rightist currents that rail against the corruption of the establishment."

Middle-class layers have been spurred into protests against the partial freezing of bank accounts. But these middle-class cacerolazos, or pot-banging protests, are not in themselves progressive. Some have an outright reactionary character, such as a recent street rally in Córdoba against rising prices that was directed against a Chinese small shopkeeper rather than the capitalist price-gougers.

"The middle-class rage registered in many of these actions can lend itself to right-wing and fascist demagoguery," Koppel said. The existence of small fascist groups and figures, such as the followers of Mohamed Ali Seineldín—a former military officer who uses nationalist and anticapitalist rhetoric—is a real part of Argentine politics to-

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# Workers occupy tile plant in fight for jobs

BY ROMINA GREEN  
AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

NEUQUÉN, Argentina—"This fight has opened our eyes to a lot of things," said José Romero, a maintenance worker at the Zanón ceramic tile factory. He and 326 other unionists have been occupying the plant here since early October to resist the company's plan to lay off most of the workforce. They have kept production lines running in order to pay workers' wages.

A contingent of 30 workers from Zanón took part in a January 7 union march in downtown Neuquén to protest the government's antilabor policies. They invited *Militant* reporters to visit the plant the following day.

The workers, members of the Ceramics Workers Union of Neuquén (SOECN), keep a round-the-clock union guard at the plant. Outside they have turned a trailer into a food pantry with donations from other unions, working people, and merchants.

Zanón, one of the largest ceramic tile manufacturers in South America, has four plants in Neuquén province, all of which are organized by the union.

While the company has long been profitable, over the past couple of years the bosses have pleaded poverty, repeatedly delaying wage payments and seeking to lay off workers. "Their goal is to keep the plant running with 60 out of the 327 workers," said union general secretary Raúl Godoy. The union is calling on the state to take over the plant and keep it running.

Safety has been a major issue in the plant, several unionists reported. Before the plant occupation, an average of one worker was injured every three days. Some workers suffer from lead poisoning. There is a two-year probation period, allowing the company to get away with unsafe practices. Over the years, workers have been fighting to slow down production. They began shutting down a line if it went too fast, prompting objections by the bosses.

## Nationwide antilabor offensive

The attack on workers at Zanón is part of

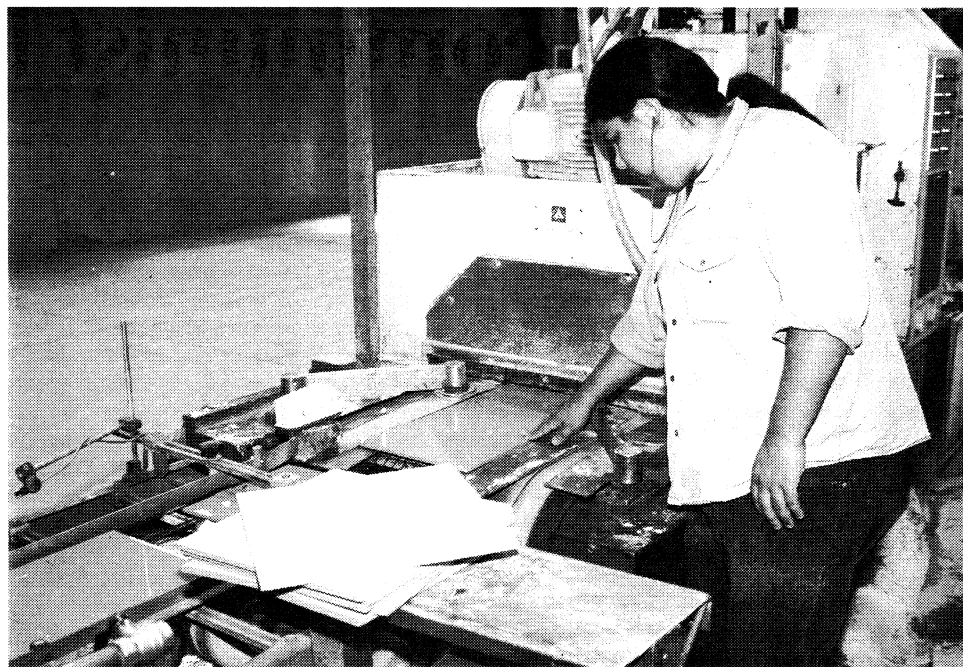
the nationwide antilabor offensive by the bosses. Two years ago the government passed "labor flexibility" legislation that extends probation, guts industry-wide bargaining, gives employers a freer hand to hire and fire, and weakens union rights. The officialdom of the General Labor Federation (CGT), the dominant union organization, went along with these attacks. After backing the Peronist administration of Carlos Menem, which launched a broadside against working people throughout the 1990s, the bureaucracy consented to the passage of the antilabor measure in April 2000, which was approved with votes from both the Radicals and the Peronists, the main capitalist parties.

At the Zanón plant, the death of a worker sparked anger. In July 2000, Daniel Ferrás, 21, suffered a heart attack on the job. The company nurse put an oxygen mask on him but the tank had no oxygen. The ambulance was delayed and Ferrás died before arrival at the hospital.

This incident coincided with the company's announcement of wage cuts and the layoff of 100 workers. The workers struck for nine days. They raised demands including an ambulance at the plant and a safety committee, and opposed the job and wage cuts. They won all their demands plus pay for the days they were on strike.

Throughout much of last year, the unionists have engaged in numerous skirmishes over back pay and working conditions. In April 2001 they struck for 34 days when the company did not pay their March wages. They set up tents to camp out at the plant gate, organized two demonstrations of hundreds of workers from around Neuquén, and blocked Highway 7, which passes in front of the factory. Workers sent teams to the local campuses to win support from students. A women's commission was organized by the unionists' wives.

The unionists returned to work after winning all their demands, but the company attacks continued. After the company announced mass layoffs, refused to pay back wages for September, and threatened to shut down the plant, the workers at Zanón occu-



Militant/ Romina Green

In response to company's plan to lay off most of the workforce, 326 members of the Ceramics Workers Union have been occupying the Zanón ceramic tile factory in Neuquén since October. They have kept up production in order to pay workers' wages.

pied the plant October 2.

Julio Araneda, 36, a palletizer and sorter, explained that the utility companies turned off the gas and electricity after the plant takeover. After some public pressure from the workers and their supporters, the electric company, run by the provincial government, agreed to turn on the electricity to prevent damage to machinery if the ceramic molds dried.

The unionists are currently running two lines using precooked ceramic material. They are pressing the government to have the gas turned on so they can operate the ovens.

## Unionists expose bosses' poverty claim

"We showed that with two days' worth of production, we were able to pay the wages of all the workers for that month," Godoy said, exposing the company's claims of poverty and its real priority of profits.

To cover their lost wages, the unionists now market the tiles at 60 percent of the previous prices. They organize to deliver the product by truck and have a network of young vendors who sell the tiles in the city.

A few months ago a labor judge ruled against the company, finding that it was conducting an "offensive lockout" and order-

ing that 40 percent of its stock be used to pay back wages.

The owners of Zanón, with the help of the provincial government and its cops, have stonewalled. The bosses and the big-business press have red-baited the union leadership. Union president Godoy, a loading machine operator with nine years' service, does not hide the fact that he is a member of the PTS, the Workers Party for Socialism. Another unionist, José Romero, remarked, "They accuse our leadership of being 'red.' I'm not left-wing or right-wing—I just want leaders who help us fight, and that's why we elected them."

On November 30, after the company sent dismissal notices to all the employees including supervisory personnel, the union organized a demonstration in front of the provincial government house, throwing all 380 telegrams into a bonfire. The police assaulted the demonstrators with tear gas and rubber bullets. As word of the attack spread through the city, state employees joined them in the street. The cops arrested 19 workers from Zanón and wounded 12. In face of a demonstration of 2,500 unionists, unemployed workers, and students demanding their release, the detainees were freed that evening.

The union fight at Zanón has won solidarity from workers around the province of Neuquén and has become a national working-class cause. SOECN has sent delegations to link up with unemployed workers in the town of Mosconi in Salta province, electrical power workers in Córdoba, state workers in La Plata, and airline and telephone workers in Buenos Aires.

Workers report that in the course of fighting the company's attacks on their jobs, wages, and working conditions, they took more control over their union. SOECN is part of the national ceramics workers union FOCRA, which is affiliated to the "dissident" wing of the CGT. The previous union officialdom, several workers said, turned a blind eye to the company's abusive practices. In 1998, after the company fired 30 workers without a response from the union officials, a group of 80 workers met and decided to run an opposition slate in the elections for the *comisión interna* (internal commission), a plant-wide body existing in many factories that is parallel to the regular union structure and that has the power to call local strikes and other actions. The slate won by an overwhelming margin. Two years later, in December 2000, the same slate swept the entrenched local officialdom out of office.

"Now we have no full-time officials. The officials work eight hours like everyone else and we do our union activity after hours," said Godoy. "The decisions are all made at general assemblies of workers, not behind closed doors."

The national ceramic workers union has given no backing to the workers at Zanón, limiting solidarity to the support that the local union has been able to win. Officials of the Argentine Workers Federation (CTA), while offering some support, have also expressed criticism of the local leadership at Zanón for not settling the fight earlier.

The company has made several offers to the workers including a "temporary" layoff at 77 percent of their pay. But the unionists say that would only be a step toward permanent layoffs. They maintain their job action and call on the state to take over the plant.

# Building a communist leadership

Continued from page 6

day. "But it's unlikely that the fascists will grow in a big way and get decisive ruling-class backing unless the working-class movement becomes strong enough to contend for power and misses decisive opportunities to do so," Koppel said.

In the workers movement today, Peronism remains the dominant political current. The two CGTs were quick to announce their support for Duhalde's government. The CTA's official position is not to support any party, but in reality its leaders give critical support to the Peronists.

"It's true that Peronism's hold is weaker than it was 35 years ago, and it's noticeably weaker among the newest generations that never lived through the postwar Perón years," Koppel said. "But Peronism is still the main political obstacle to communism and a clear proletarian line of march in the Argentine workers movement today."

"It's not uncommon for a militant worker to say that today's Peronist party and politicians 'have betrayed Perón's ideals' and that the Peronists 'are no better than the Radicals.' But such a statement doesn't mean a break with Peronism—it reflects a continuing illusion in the 'ideal' promoted by Perón that a bourgeois government can fight imperialist oppression and advance the interests of working people in Argentina. In fact, many workers who denounce today's Peronists still have a picture of Juan and Evita Perón in their living room or union hall."

## Other currents in workers movement

All the major radical currents that contend for influence in the workers movement today played a role during the prerevolutionary period of the early 1970s. Yet none has drawn a real balance sheet on the lessons of those events, Koppel said, because their political course contributed to the defeat or because they have changed their views. And none provides revolutionary leadership today.

The Argentine Communist Party is a shadow of its former self. It was badly discredited by its decision to back the military junta in 1976–82 in exchange for the hope of avoiding repression. It pursues a class-collaborationist course similar to that of Stalinist parties around the world, and was further weakened by the crumbling of its mentors and paymasters in the Soviet Union.

Among the other currents in the workers movement, the various self-designated Trotskyist groups maintain a visible presence in the unions, as they have historically in Argentina, but they are increasingly fragmented, Koppel noted. The Movement Toward Socialism (MAS), which was led by Nahuel Moreno until his death in 1987, has split into several groups, including the Socialist Workers Movement (MST) and the Workers Party for Socialism (PTS). These groups maintain an ultraleft sectarian course, as illustrated by the perennial chant of "For a constituent assembly" by one such group, the Workers Party (PO). The MST's focus today is largely electoral; it is in an electoral bloc with the CP called United Left.

Other currents range from radical Peronists, some of which focus largely on "community work" in impoverished neighborhoods, to anarchists, which attract a layer of radicalized youth because of their stance "against all political parties."

## Rebuilding communist movement

This lack of proletarian leadership is not going to change overnight, Koppel said. But as the capitalist crisis grinds away and the ruling class tries to solve its problems at the expense of working people, defensive struggles continue and revolutionary-minded workers and young people continue to seek answers.

In her presentation, Romina Green described the thirst for revolutionary politics that the international team encountered in Argentina, from members of the Metalworkers Union occupying a plant on the

outskirts of Buenos Aires to university students in Córdoba.

"Many of those we met were particularly interested in talking to communists from North America about working-class politics in the United States and Canada," Green said. They purchased books like *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics and Capitalism's World Disorder*. "A lot of people wanted to know what we thought about the U.S. government's war drive in Central Asia and its repercussions inside the United States, including the U.S. government's attacks on workers' rights at home under the pretext of 'fighting terrorism.'"

Others were attracted to *Che Talks to Young People* and other books on the Cuban Revolution. These books are essential, Green said, to counter misconceptions that Ernesto Che Guevara was simply a heroic guerrilla fighter rather than the political leader of working people that he was, both in the mass struggle to overthrow the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship and then in the efforts by workers and farmers to reorganize society.

The Cordobazo and other working-class uprisings in Argentina in the late 1960s and early 1970s are not simply of historical interest, Green noted. She underscored a point made by Jack Barnes in *Capitalism's World Disorder*, "For revolutionary-minded workers, such events confirm what our class is capable of and what we know is coming sooner or later in every country of the world." "The work we did in Argentina had the same goal as the Young Socialists who took part in last summer's world youth festival and recent anti-imperialist meetings, seeking out revolutionary-minded youth," Green concluded. "It's through this kind of work that the communist movement will begin to be rebuilt internationally, including in Argentina."

Argiris Malapanis is a meatpacker in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

# 'Rebel Army was the people in uniform'

Reprinted below is the second installment from the chapter "Lucha Contra Bandidos" in the Escambray of the new Pathfinder book *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*, an interview with Cuban revolutionary Victor Dreke.

Dreke fought in the Cuban revolutionary war, led by the Rebel Army, that overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in January 1959. In the early 1960s, he was a commander of the volunteer battalions that fought the U.S.-organized counterrevolutionary bands in the Escambray mountains of central Cuba. In 1965 he was second in command of the column of Cuban internationalist volunteers, headed by Ernesto Che Guevara, that joined with national liberation fighters in the Congo. He subsequently carried out numerous internationalist missions in Africa.

Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, and Luis Madrid, a Pathfinder editor, conducted the first session of the interview with Dreke in Havana on Oct. 26, 1999. Pathfinder editor Michael Taber and *Perspectiva Mundial* editor Martín Koppel joined Waters in a second interview session on Dec. 2, 2001.

This book is now available, with simultaneous editions in English and Spanish. Copyright © 2002 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

The *Militant* will be reprinting the final part of the chapter in the next issues.



**Waters:** Where were you when the invasion at Girón began?

**Dreke:** In April 1961 I was head of the Hatillo militia training school, which I mentioned earlier. A session of the school had just ended, and I requested a transfer to Oriente, to the Tactical Force of Oriente in Caney de las Mercedes headed by compañero Armando Acosta. I left very early on the morning of April 17, 1961, the very day of the invasion.

On the way I stopped in Santa Clara to pick up the letter of transfer at the general staff headquarters.

When I got there, I looked around and it was bedlam. There were people coming and going every which way.

"What's happened?" I asked.

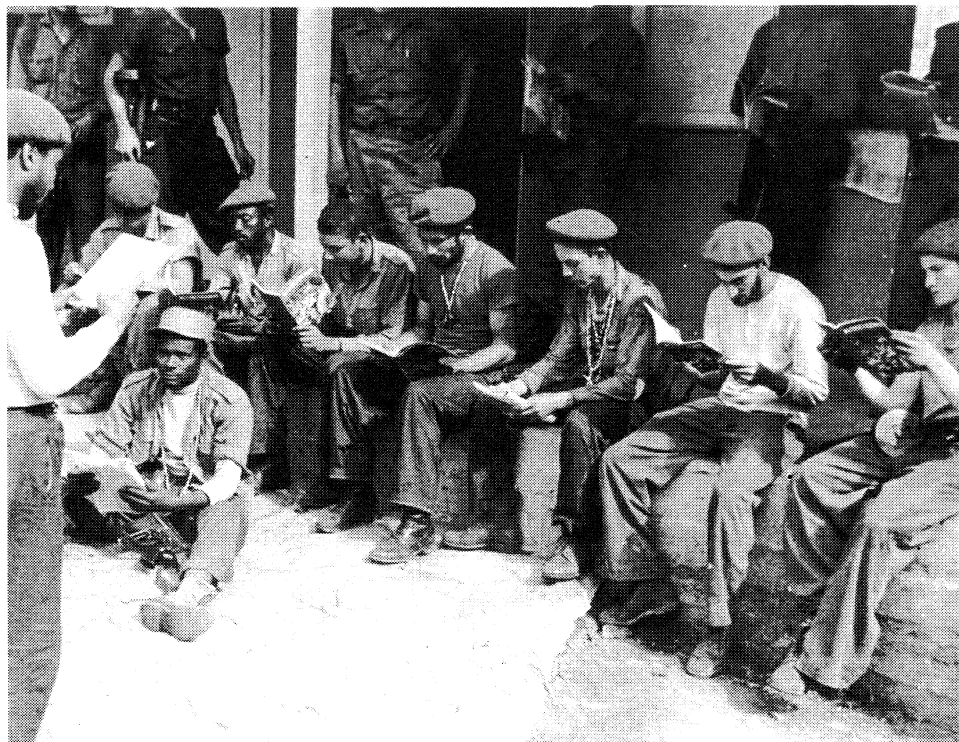
"The mercenaries have landed at Girón," someone told me—although I think they said it was the Americans that had landed. At the time I sort of knew where Girón was, but I'd never been there before.

I jumped into the car and headed for Girón. At each town I came to, I'd ask "Where's Girón?" They said it was close to Yaguaramas, so I headed over there.

When I got to Yaguaramas, I witnessed a moving scene. The population of the town was in the street asking for arms and applauding all the combatants as we passed through.

As we went through the area we could hear shots. Canefields were on fire and cars were burning.

I came across a group of militia compañeros from the 117th Battalion. I took



Soldiers in the specialized command of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, the *Lucha Contra Bandidos* (struggle against bandits) taking reading lessons. In 1961 when the literacy campaign began, a teacher was added to the command structure "since our soldiers were illiterate and they too were learning how to read and write."

command of the battalion and got in touch with compañero René de los Santos at the command post in Yaguaramas. Later that day we clashed with an enemy paratroop unit.

The evening of April 18 the commander in chief gave us instructions that at dawn our artillery would open fire and that our troops were to begin advancing shortly after that, to arrive in Girón at 6:00 p.m. on April 19.

As we were advancing on the 19th, I noticed it was already 4:00 p.m. and we still had quite a ways to go. I hopped in a jeep with two or three compañeros and said, "Let's get to Girón!"

The previous night three tanks had arrived, along with compañero Emilio Aragonés, and they were now accompanying us. But instead of staying with the tanks, which were our protection, the jeep got out in front of the company.

Shortly after 5:00 we fell into an ambush by one of the remaining small enemy groups. As I was aiming my rifle, I was shot in the arm and the leg. The compañeros put me in the jeep and took me to Santa Clara.

Within an hour after I was wounded, our forces took Girón.

**Waters:** After the first cleanup operation and the defeat of the U.S.-organized forces at the Bay of Pigs, what was the situation of the bandits? How did they regroup and reorganize?

**Dreke:** Out of the first cleanup, one group of bandits escaped unharmed and managed to hide. It included Osvaldo Ramírez, Tartabul, and Campito. At a famous gathering of the bandits in July 1961, called the Cicatero meeting, the bands were restructured. The CIA had its hand in this, along

with Osvaldo and Evelio Duque, who were together. A dispute eventually erupted between those two over who was going to be in charge. But at this meeting, a new structure was created that involved dividing up the bandits in the Escambray by zone, by area.<sup>1</sup>

In response, we divided up the Escambray into sectors, structuring it the way the bandits had done. We'd received pretty good information from State Security.

The three main sectors we set up in the Escambray were Sector A, Sector F, and Sector G. Sector A encompassed Salto de Habanilla, which was a very important area, one of the most mountainous zones of the Escambray. Sector F was in Banao. And Sector G was in Minas Bajas, which is next to the Santa Clara region.

The first headquarters of the Escambray section was set up in Manicaragua. Later it was transferred to Trinidad.

There were additional sectors, as well. Sector B was created in the Yaguajay zone, encompassing Florencia, Tamarindo, Arroyo Blanco, and the zone where the bandit Mario Bravo and those people were. Sector C covered the zone of Rodas, Cartagena, part of Cienfuegos, and Aguada de Pasajeros, where there were also bandits. Sector D covered Sagua-Corralillo. Sector E encompassed Camagüey, Ciego de Avila, and all those places, which were then a single province going up to the border of Oriente province. Those were the main sectors at that time. There were also the Matanzas sectors, which I'm not going to get into right now.

What were the characteristics of the sectors and subsectors?

Each sector had a four-person command: a military head, a political instructor, a chief of information, and a doctor or nurse. Since at that time we didn't have too many doctors, the fourth was often a nurse. In 1961, when the literacy campaign began, we added a teacher, since our soldiers were illiterate and they too were learning how to read and write. Each sector was then divided into zones. With this structure, a more organized and effective stage of the battle began.

In July 1962 the commander in chief and the minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces created a specialized command, the LCB—Lucha Contra Bandidos [struggle against bandits]. This new command operated in the Escambray, in Las Villas province, and throughout the country.

Those of us assigned to the LCB were the same ones who'd previously participated in pursuing the bandits as members of the Rebel Army and the militias. The command was headed up by compañero Raúl Menéndez Tomasovich. Previously the fight against the bandits had been directed by Piti Fajardo and then Dermidio Escalona; after Tomasovich it was headed by Osvaldo "Pineo" Lorenzo Castro and then Lizardo Proenza.

I was second in command of the LCB

overall and headed the forces in the Escambray sector, an area that includes parts of the present-day provinces of Cienfuegos, Sancti Spiritus, and Villa Clara. At that time these were all part of a single province, Las Villas.

We began operations with information provided by the peasants.

"There's a group of bandits over there," they would tell us.

We'd run out to catch them. Sometimes there would be bandits, sometimes just peasants cutting undergrowth. Other times they'd tell us there were bandits somewhere, and we'd say: "There aren't any bandits there; that's crazy. It's all lies." Then it turned out there really were bandits there. All those things happened during the initial stage of the fight.

We established a very important school in Condado, the Corporals' School. Its purpose was to train leaders of squads and other small units that would be the first troops to clash with the enemy.

A corporal is the immediate superior for a squad. It's a very important rank. Because in a military operation each piece of terrain is covered by a squad, that is, by seven, eight, sometimes ten men. It varied. Seven was the usual figure for us at the time, and there was a leader among these seven men who commanded the group.

So a school was established to prepare these youth for command, since they were peasants, workers, students who had no military background. They hadn't participated in the war of liberation. And the Rebel Army wasn't big enough to fill all the command positions we now needed. We were not even three thousand men in arms at the time the revolution triumphed. But even before, the idea had never been for the Rebel Army to hold all the command positions. Why? Because, as Camilo said, the Rebel Army was the people—it was the people in uniform.

The situation was the same in the Escambray.

In addition to compañeros already in the Rebel Army, the school included the militia officers, who we referred to as militia lieutenants, to be trained as battalion and company commanders, and so on. There were company-level people, such as Gustavo Castellón—"the Mayaguara Horse"—Julián Morejón, Catalino Olacchea, and others who became quite famous in the struggle against the bandits.

During this new stage, State Security began to play a more important, a more fundamental role than previously. I mentioned earlier that there were places where we lacked information. State Security was now beginning to get organized. Wherever we had a sector there was a State Security group. They worked on their own but they collaborated with us in the LCB.

Furthermore, the party had its own structure in the zone. The Federation of Women, the CDRs, ANAP, and the youth organization were all working in the zone.<sup>2</sup> In other words, the revolutionary organizations were participating together with us throughout the entire battle. The political and ideological work they conducted was very important.

In addition, a series of social measures were taken in the Escambray.

Medical centers were set up throughout the region with doctors from Havana or Santa Clara, and medical supplies were made available to the population. The first doctors to graduate after the victory of the revolution, those who were in medical school at the time of the triumph, were sent to the Escambray. Schools were established, and we provided teachers for them.

We set up the Ana Betancourt School in

Continued on Page 13

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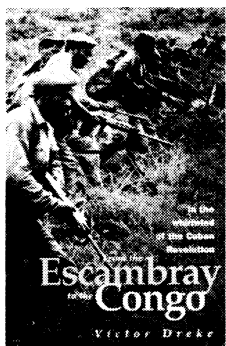
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# U.S. rulers drive to deepen control over Central Asia region

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

A misnamed "donors" conference convened January 21-22 by the imperialist powers in Tokyo shone a spotlight on Washington's drive to deepen its control over Afghanistan and the surrounding Central Asian region.

Washington also used the conference to press its imperialist rivals to foot the bill for rebuilding the basic infrastructure of the country. The Bush administration has said that since Washington has been spending more than \$90 million a month prosecuting the war on Afghanistan, other imperialist powers should contribute the bulk of reconstruction costs as well as provide the troops for the UN-sanctioned occupation force stationed in the Afghan capital.

This British-led force has now set up more than 30 checkpoints in the capital city, and press reports indicate people cannot travel anywhere around the city without being stopped, questioned, or searched.

The new interim Afghan government led by Hamid Karzai has given its full backing to Washington's current military occupation of Afghanistan and the imperialist force in the capital city. At the largest U.S. military installation in the country, located in Kandahar, the U.S. army has now taken over formal command from the Marine Corps for longterm use. The Pentagon is maintaining round-the-clock aerial surveillance in the country as they gather new targets to bombard.

Like the conference held in Germany that chose the interim government in Afghanistan at the end of last year, the meeting in Japan didn't grow out of any discussions or consultations with organizations, regional or local governments, or political parties in Afghanistan.

Leading up to the conference the Afghan administration's planning minister Mohammad Mohaqiq said that the country will need \$45 billion in reconstruction funds over the next decade. Faced with imperialist displeasure over such a high figure, Haron Amin, Afghanistan's top diplomat in Washington, cut that estimate by half, but, noted a *Washington Post*, "it still far exceeded what American and other international officials say is practical."

The World Bank and the United Nations say \$15 billion would be more in line with Afghanistan's needs over the next decade, but didn't make clear how such a figure was arrived at.

Karzai, pleading for aid at the conference, said his country "has had nothing but disaster, war, brutality, and deprivation against its people for so many years." Pointing to the elegant surroundings in the Tokyo hotel in which they were meeting, Karzai said, "What you see here isn't what you see in Afghanistan."

## Imperialist exploitation

Modern Afghanistan, with a population

of 25 million people and an average life expectancy of just 46 years, is one of the poorest countries in the world, a product of the exploitation and oppression imposed upon the peoples there over the past two centuries, first by British colonial rule and then U.S. imperialist intervention.

Until the early 1970s, the country was ruled by King Muhammad Zahir Shah who was ousted in a 1973 coup under pressure of growing unrest by workers and peasants. Under his reign, peasants, who comprised 80 percent of the workforce, were forced to labor under semifeudal conditions.

The Stalinist bureaucracy in Moscow also had a hand in the devastation imposed on the country through a decade-long occupation that was opposed by a majority of the population. U.S.-backed groups, having driven the Soviets out, turned on each other in battles for control of the capital and other regions. A leader of the Northern Alliance who was president of the country before being swept out by the Taliban in 1996 massacred up to 50,000 people and destroyed a large section of Kabul in 1992, for example.

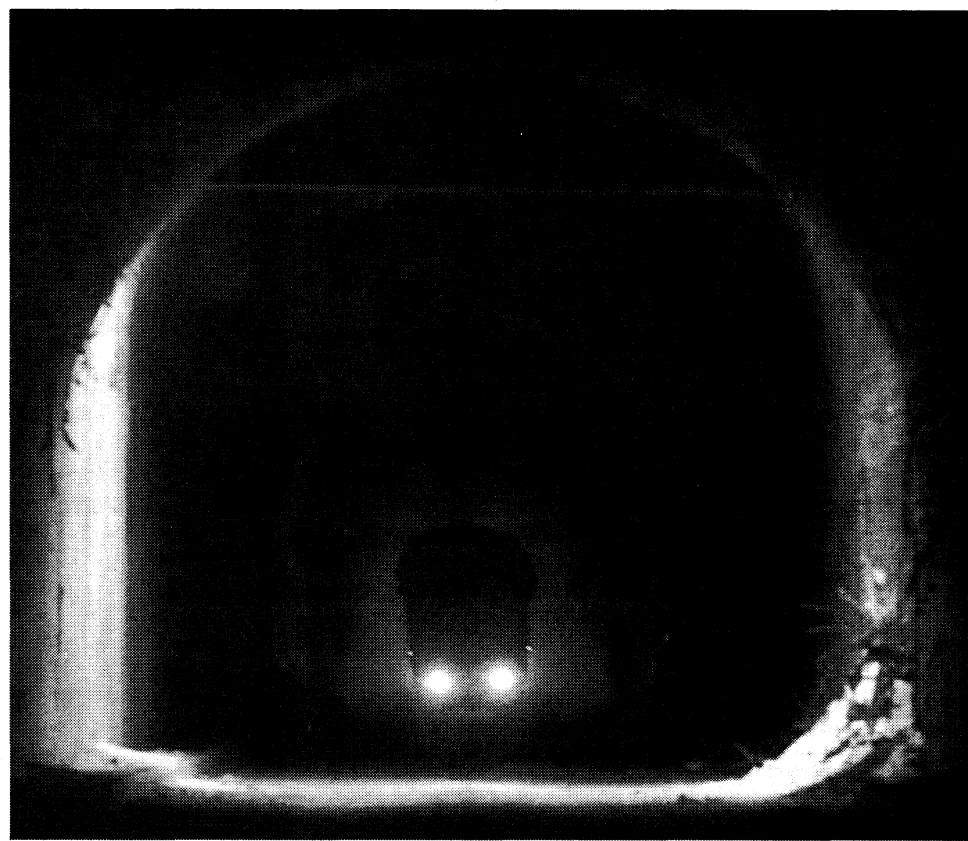
At the "donors" conference, the major imperialist powers of the United States, Japan, and countries comprising the European Union cobbled together the bulk of the \$1.5 billion in aid promised for the next year. U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell announced with fanfare that Washington would provide \$297 million. But upon closer examination, press reports indicate only about \$80 million of this is new funds not previously allocated for operations in Afghanistan.

Tokyo promised \$250 million, and the European Union slightly less than \$500 million for next year. In addition, Saudi Arabia pledged \$220 million over three years and Iran pledged \$120 million each year for the next five years.

Rather than donations to the new U.S.-backed regime in Kabul, most of the funds will be funneled to special projects of the imperialist countries, giving each a direct impact inside Afghanistan. U.S. officials have stated that the top priority for the funds they are dispensing is to establish "order and security," meaning strengthening the operations of the police and boosting Karzai in his efforts to create a nationwide army. Washington, for example, plans to dispense its aid through government agencies, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Less than \$100 million of direct money is being offered to the Afghan government, which is essentially bankrupt with some 235,000 government employees owed \$70 million in back wages for the past six months. To address this situation Afghan president Karzai has said that he will slash the number of workers on his payroll.

According to Mark Brown, administrator of the United Nations Development Program, Karzai's government "would have no meaningful income for the next two years,



**Devastation of Salang Tunnel after repeated bombing by Northern Alliance forces in 1997 attests to massive rebuilding job facing Afghanistan. Tunnel built with help of Soviet Union was key commercial route for buses and trucks heading from Kabul. President Bush, meanwhile, is seeking a \$48 billion increase to U.S. military budget.**

during which the World Bank, the United Nations, and the Asian Development Bank will pay salaries and oversee government spending," reported the *New York Times* January 22.

Karzai for his part has promised to hire a "reputable international firm to audit our expenditures on a regular basis."

## Funds to boost police and army

Despite urging by Washington and the new president, little progress has been made in putting together a national army. With the Taliban gone, those who formerly held positions of power are back, seeking to once again rule large sections of the country as their private fiefdoms. None of these regional commanders have taken steps to merge their forces with the Northern Alliance militia now under the command of the interim Afghan government in Kabul.

"Warlords whose armies acted as proxy U.S. ground forces in the anti-Taliban campaign are now refusing to disarm or accept the writ of the country's fledgling interim government. They are even defying the Americans," stated a January 16 *Wall Street Journal* article.

The various organizations are keeping ties with governments that have backed them in the past. Ankara and Moscow, for example, are supporting Gen. Rashid Dostum, who runs the northern Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif and surrounding areas.

The Iranian government, against which Washington is now stepping up its threats, has resumed military and economic ties with Ismail Khan and other commanders who control three western provinces. Among Washington's complaints is that Tehran is "preparing to set up a radio and TV station for Gen. Khan without permission from the central government," noted the *Journal*.

## Oil wealth in Central Asia

Washington has been making substantial progress in establishing military bases from Central Asia down to the Indian Ocean. With a substantial operation based in Kandahar, Afghanistan, four bases in Pakistan, as well as in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, the U.S. capitalist rulers are placing themselves in a stronger position to exercise their military might against toilers in the region.

This also gives them the ability to control the substantial oil and gas reserves available in the area, lessening the dependence of U.S. imperialism on the Mideast to meet its energy needs and strengthening its competitive position over this vital natural resource in relation to its imperialist rivals.

According to testimony before Congress in March 1999 by the conservative think tank Heritage Foundation, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan together have 15 billion barrels of proven oil reserves. The same countries also have proven gas deposits totaling not less than 9 trillion cubic meters.

One of the projects that had been under consideration at that time was to build an oil pipeline across Afghanistan to a terminal to be located on the coast of Pakistan.

In 1998 the California-based Unocal Corporation had mapped out plans to construct such a pipeline. Testifying before a House of Representatives International Relations subcommittee in February of that year, John Maresca, a Unocal vice president, emphasized, "From the outset, we have made it clear that construction of the pipeline we have proposed across Afghanistan could not begin until a recognized government is in place that has the confidence of governments, lenders, and our company."

Afghanistan itself "has significant oil and gas deposits," noted an article from the Hong Kong-based *Asia Times*. In the 1980s Soviet Union officials estimated Afghanistan's proven and probable natural gas reserves at around 5 trillion cubic feet and oil reserves at 95 million barrels. The massive Logar copper mine, just south of Kabul, has in reserve 11 billion tonnes. There are also gold mines in the southern cities of Kandahar and Zabul.

## Next focus on Yemen, Somalia

"War May Next Focus on Yemen, Somalia," headlined an article in the January 21 *Wall Street Journal*. Among the moves under consideration, the article reports, "is the redeployment of unmanned Predator drones now flying over Afghanistan to permit regular surveillance above Yemen, on the southwest corner of the Arabian peninsula, and Somalia, which sits across the Gulf of Aden on the Horn of Africa."

Officials are also discussing "how large a deployment of Central Intelligence Agency paramilitary teams and special forces commandos would be required in Yemen and Somalia and whether that would necessitate reducing the U.S. presence in Afghanistan," the *Journal* added.

Washington has also begun rebuilding its ties to the military in Indonesia. Cooperation had been halted in 1999 in light of public outrage over Indonesian military atrocities in East Timor. "A loophole in a recent defense appropriations bill, allegedly inserted at the Pentagon's behest," stated the *Journal*, will allow U.S. military personnel to resume training Indonesian military officers.

Meanwhile, rumors have been circulating in the capitalist media that Saudi Arabia's rulers are considering asking Washington to pull its military forces out of that country. The 4,500 U.S. troops stationed at the Prince Sultan air base, south of Saudi's capital Riyadh, played a key logistical role in the bombing of Afghanistan. U.S. planes based there also regularly carry out bombing missions inside the Iraqi border.

Two top U.S. State Department officials recently paid a visit to Saudi Arabia. Department spokespeople insist that Saudi officials neither formally or informally have asked the U.S. forces to leave. "There has been no discussion of such an issue," insisted Powell. However, some military planners are looking into some other options. "We need a base in that region, but it seems to me we should find a place that is more hospitable," stated Carl Levin, chair of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee.

## for further reading

### Opening Guns of World War III

#### Washington's Assault on Iraq

Jack Barnes

The U.S. government's murderous assault on Iraq heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, the rise of rightist and fascist forces, growing instability of international capitalism, and more wars.

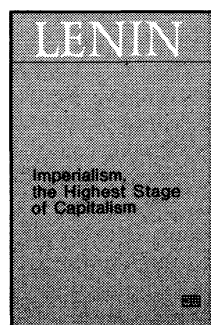
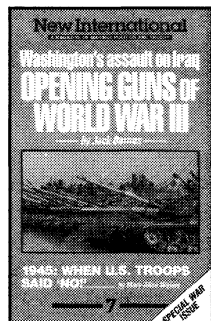
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# 'Terror' detentions: an assault on rights

Continued from front page

New Jersey chapter announced at a press conference January 22 it is filing a lawsuit against Hudson and Passaic Counties demanding the names of all INS detainees. "Our lawsuit is relying on very clear state law, three different statutes, requiring that jails make public the names and other information on those being held."

Many of those imprisoned since September 11 have been moved to jails in New Jersey by federal authorities. They are held in two cell blocks and four dormitories, each of which "holds 30 to 60 men, crammed into triple bunks, bumping into one another as they make their way to and from a single shower," reported the New Jersey *Star-Ledger*. No "contact visits" by family members are permitted and trips to the gymnasium are limited to two a week.

The INS has denied access to detainees who have asked for legal visits and, in response to an earlier lawsuit, released the names of 725 people it had detained. But on the list provided, the Justice Department blacked out the names and arrest and custody locations of all those it held. In more than a dozen cases there was a lag of a month between arrest and filing of any charge.

The *St. Petersburg Times* wrote on January 13 that in Florida alone dozens of people "are being held on immigration infractions that would have been handled with a simple telephone call before September 11. Now, all the government needs to jail them indefinitely is the most slender connection to terrorism." U.S. attorney general John Ashcroft has justified the policy, saying that officials are using "every constitutional tool to keep suspected terrorists locked up."

At the time of President George Bush's decision to institute military tribunals for trials of some alleged "terrorists," Vice President Richard Cheney stated that such people "don't deserve the same guarantees and safeguards that would be used for an American citizen."

Of the more than 1,000 people detained in that period across the United States, only one, Zacarias Moussaoui, faces charges related to the attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. Twenty-five are being held on other charges "related to terrorism" or under material witness warrants—that is, on the possibility that they possess relevant information. Some 62 others have been charged with federal crimes. A number of prisoners have already been deported.

## 'Justice' backwards

Although lawyers have a hard time gaining access to jails in New Jersey, a "constant flow" of FBI agents visit the cells to interrogate the prisoners in a room housing half a dozen glass cubicles. Among the detainees, explained the *Star-Ledger*, is taxi driver Faizul Jabar, 30, from Guyana, still held after being cleared of suspicion of constructing a bomb in his Queens, New York, apartment. "I would think by now if you investigate and you don't find anything, you let him go," said his sister. "We're not even from the Middle East."

Khalid Asam, a lawyer who represents several detainees, told the paper "how it works. First you are guilty, then you are a suspect, then you are released."

Through their own testimony, the words

of legal counsel, or the protests of friends and family members, a number of detainees have gotten their stories published in the media. Authorities have reportedly denied prisoners contact with their families and supporters, and obstructed their legal representatives. They have also placed some in solitary confinement, as they did with five Cubans arrested in Florida who were convicted on frame-up charges of conspiracy to commit espionage and other crimes, and who face sentences from 19 years to life.

Among those incarcerated are:

•Anser Mehmood, 40, a truck driver in New Jersey who was born in Pakistan. He has been held under high security at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, New York, since October 3. Although he faces no criminal charges, Mehmood has been denied bond. Mehmood's wife was refused permission to see him for more than nine weeks. Finally she told officials, "I was not leaving until I get to meet my husband.... But it was so terrible to see him through the bars with his hands and legs chained."

•Rabih Haddad was seized at his Detroit home on December 14. The INS is holding him on a minor visa violation while the government investigates the Global Relief Foundation, a charity he helped to found. His family was refused entry to a bond hearing on December 19. They joined 200 other supporters of the jailed Muslim cleric outside the hearing, in which Haddad himself appeared via video. "We do not support the 'secret evidence' concept," said Mahmoud Habel, who has helped to collect more than 4,000 signatures on a petition calling for Haddad's release.

## Held in isolation

•Abdulaziz Alomary, a Saudi Arabian citizen, was picked up at Miami International Airport because his name is similar to that of one of the September 11 hijackers. After that was cleared up, Alomary was held for a parole violation and placed in isolation, "for his own protection," according to authorities, for two weeks in a jail in Pinella County, Florida. "The only reason he was being treated that way was because he was an Arab," said Bruce Udolf, his attorney.

•Muhammad Mubeen, 28, a Pakistani national who works as a gas station attendant, was imprisoned because he renewed his driver's license at the same Florida office and on the same day as hijacker Mohamed Atta.

•Abdallah Higazy, 30, spent 31 days in a federal lockup, accused of possessing an aviation radio on September 11 in his hotel room near the World Trade Center. Denied bail, the student was released on January 16 after the radio's owner came forward to claim it. Higazy's lawyer, Robert Dunn, said that during an FBI interrogation his client had been subjected to "unrelenting pressure." Dunn himself had been excluded from the interrogation session.

•Mukram Ali, a student and Indian immigrant, has been held in secret for months by the FBI as a "material witness." In Oklahoma Ali roomed with Zacarias Moussaoui, who has been accused of preparing to join the September 11 hijackers. Ali has denied any knowledge of the attacks. The FBI "hasn't decided whether they believe him," reported the January 18 *New York Post*, "be-



More than 100 alleged members of al Qaeda are being held at the Guantanamo naval base in chicken wire cages constantly shackled and handcuffed.

cause the two appeared to be friends, not just roommates."

## Conditions at Guantanamo base

The prisoners seized by the U.S. military during its assault on Afghanistan face even more trying conditions. The 450 alleged members of al Qaeda or the Taliban are held inside Afghanistan, on ships in the Arab-Persian Gulf, and at the Guantanamo Naval base in Cuba.

Attention has focused on the more than 100 prisoners incarcerated at Camp X-Ray at Guantanamo. Around 1,500 marines and military police have been flown to the base to expand the compound's capacity to 2,000 prisoners.

The U.S. government continues to occupy Guantanamo base at the eastern end of Cuba under a lease signed with a U.S.-installed regime in 1903. Since 1959 the Cuban government has called for the removal of the military facility. By holding the prisoners at the base, the U.S. government is bound by fewer restrictions than it would face on U.S. soil.

Transported in the freezing holds of military cargo planes, under sedation and with hoods or blacked-out goggles over their eyes; held in chicken wire cages—described as "kennels" by one reporter—exposed to sun and rain, with one-inch thick foam mats as beds; constantly shackled and handcuffed; the prisoners' plight has sparked controversy from civil liberties supporters. Washington's imperialist allies have also used the opportunity to score some political points.

The Pentagon has termed the men "unlawful combatants," refusing to acknowledge that they are prisoners of war—a classification that would require its actions to be judged according to the 1949 Geneva Convention on such prisoners. POWs, according to that convention, include members of militias and "volunteer corps, including those of organized resistance movements, belonging to a Party to the conflict and operating in or outside their own territory," with the proviso that they serve under a command structure and carry weapons openly.

British foreign secretary Jack Straw stated January 17, "I think it is very important for these people to be held according to the principles of international law.... That's the way in which one can maintain the moral ascendancy here, and the reverse is obviously true." At least three of the prisoners are reportedly British citizens. Several other pro-Taliban British and French nationals were captured during the assault.

While claiming that Camp X-Ray "will be humane," Marine Brig.-Gen. Michael Lehnert stated, "We have no intention of

making it comfortable."

U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld said on January 17 that some prisoners at Guantanamo would face indefinite detention. "The issue as to what happens to those people will follow the interrogations and the process of getting as much information out of them as we can," he stated. While some could be tried in U.S. civilian courts, "some may or may not end up in a military commission. Others could end up in the U.S. criminal court system. Others conceivably could be returned to their countries of nationality and end up being prosecuted there."

"It's conceivable some could be kept in detention for a period while additional intelligence information is gathered or if they simply are dangerous—and there's no question, there are a number down in Guantanamo Bay who, every time anyone walks by, threaten to kill Americans the first chance they get," the defense secretary asserted.

This allegation has received widespread currency in the U.S. media. U.S. Army colonel Terence Carrico, who acts as the warden at the compound, said that as far as he knew only one prisoner had made such a threat.

## John Walker charged

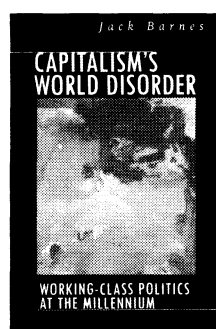
Another prisoner of war, John Walker, was charged on January 15 with conspiring to kill U.S. citizens in Afghanistan and providing support to terrorist groups—offenses that carry maximum sentences of life in prison. Announcing that the government would not pursue the capital charge of treason, Ashcroft said that Walker, who is a U.S. citizen, "turned his back on our country and our values.... Youth is not absolution for treachery."

The 20-year-old surrendered with Taliban forces at the city of Kunduz. He was interrogated by CIA agent Michael Spann at the fortress in Mazar-i-Sharif shortly before a rebellion broke out, during which hundreds of prisoners were gunned down and Walker himself was wounded.

The case against Walker is based on testimony U.S. authorities say he gave during 45 days of interrogations aboard the *USS Bataan* in the Arabian Sea. Neither Walker's parents nor attorneys they hired have been allowed any contact with him throughout the period since his capture. The lawyers are expected to challenge the contention that Walker spoke voluntarily with the FBI.

"In a situation where he was locked up...and surrounded by people on the other side of a war, it's hard to imagine that Walker was fully aware of his rights and understood his right to counsel," said Elisa Massimino, the Washington director of the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights.

## FROM PATHFINDER



## Capitalism's World Disorder

WORKING-CLASS POLITICS AT THE MILLENNIUM

Jack Barnes

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# N.J. cops get leniency in turnpike shooting

BY AMY HUSK

MERCER COUNTY, New Jersey—Outrage has greeted a January 14 court decision to deliver a slap on the wrist to John Hogan and James Kenna. The two New Jersey state troopers, who are white, opened fire on four unarmed Black and Hispanic men on the New Jersey turnpike in 1998, seriously injuring three of them.

Pleading guilty before the county Superior Court to charges of "official misconduct" and of making false statements in connection with the incident, Hogan and Kenna were fired from their jobs and fined \$280 each. Charges of aggravated assault and attempted murder, which could have brought prison sentences of up to 20 years, were dropped by prosecutor James Gerrow as part of a plea bargain. Neither cop will serve any jail time or be placed on probation.

The 1998 incident sparked protests among Blacks and Hispanics in New Jersey, and helped to fuel a nationwide debate on the widespread police practice of racial profiling. State and federal officials were forced to investigate widespread accusations against New Jersey State Police that pointed to racist methods as standard operating procedure.

A 1999 report by the state attorney general admitted that racial profiling by troopers was "real—not imagined."

In accepting the plea bargain, Judge

Charles Delehy said the cops acted out of "misguided zeal and misguided loyalty born of an indoctrination into an approach to law enforcement that can generally be described as Machiavellian—the end justifies the means."

Kenna and Hogan told the court that they had followed state police policy to aggressively stop and arrest Black and Hispanic drivers on the turnpike. Some 75 other troopers had helped them to cover up the crime, said the two cops.

They explained that troopers routinely targeted Black and Hispanic drivers for illegal car searches, frequently engaging in "rip and strip"—cop jargon for the dismantling of car doors, allegedly in search of drugs.

Hogan said that covering up the practice of racial profiling was commonplace and condoned. "No one at the station, including supervisors, seemed to be concerned when a minority arrestee was brought to the station after the radio call had identified that driver as white," he said. "From the time when I first came to the Turnpike I was aware this was occurring. It was so common I just assumed it was how it was done."

## Outrage greets decision

Many Blacks and others rejected the idea that the cops should be let off so lightly because they were just "doing their jobs."



Militant/Nancy Rosenstock

Rally in Irvington, New Jersey, in May 2001 protests police killing of Bilal Gilbert. Shooting by state troopers the previous year sparked protests and helped to fuel a nationwide debate on police brutality and racial profiling.

Regina Waynes Joseph, president of the Garden State Bar Association, a group of Black lawyers, said her organization was outraged.

"That the judge characterized Kenna and

Hogan as victims in this debacle, rather than the four students who were shot at 11 times for no reason at all, I believe tells the whole story about race in this country," said Joseph. "Essentially the message this sends is that the life of a child of color is worth \$280."

## 'What cops do every day'

At a January 18 forum on the fight for Black rights in Newark, speakers Ron Washington, from the Black Telephone Workers for Justice, and Ved Dookhun, of the Socialist Workers Party, denounced the plea bargain. Referring to the turnpike assault, Dookhun said, "This is what cops do every day. These are the kinds of conditions that workers—especially Black and immigrant workers—face every day under capitalism. The brutality meted out by cops in New Jersey mirrors the brutality carried out by the U.S. military against workers in Afghanistan."

Washington and Dookhun encouraged forum participants to join a January 21 rally celebrating Martin Luther King's birthday and demanding that the Verizon telephone company allow workers a paid holiday. The rally, which attracted some 120 participants, also called for an end to police brutality and opposed the war in Afghanistan and associated attacks on civil liberties.

On January 17 the leaders of a number of New Jersey civil rights organizations held a press conference demanding new hearings to determine which cops had been part of the conspiracy to cover up the shooting.

# Land conflict deepens in Scotland

Continued from Page 16

may be needed towards crofters and crofting communities."

At the same time, the federation cautions against crofters being forced into buying. "We feel it would be a mistake for crofters to be pushed into this purchase without having had time to consider how the land would viably be managed in the future," the statement said.

The Scottish Landowners Federation (SLF) in turn released a furious statement claiming, the "crofting right to buy perpetuates the nightmare scenario. Nothing of significance has been done to change the perception of expropriation of private property just because someone else wants it.... Ministers should be honest enough to call it nationalization." Lord Strathclyde of the Conservative Party in the House of Lords stated, "Even the Soviet Union never tried something like this."

The federation is also vigorously lobbying for the exclusion of title to fishing and mineral rights from compulsory purchase. In fact, the bill does separate these rights from the land, offering crofting communities the ability to buy the fishing and mineral rights at market price for up to one year after they have successfully taken over crofting land. Any bid has to be accompanied by a business plan subject to government approval. It is also unclear if the right to buy includes the seabed adjacent to crofting land, currently owned by the "crown estate."

## Tenant farmers demand rights

Landowners are also concerned about a move amongst some tenant farmers—the majority of small farmers in Scotland—to

push for legislation also giving them the right to compulsory purchase of the land they work. Many tenant farmers rent land on the big estates. The National Farmers Union of Scotland (NFUS) announced it would consult its members on the question.

The NFUS, like its counterparts in England and Wales, is dominated by capitalist farmers. One-third of its members are tenant farmers. Pressure is growing within the organization as the class interests of large and small farmers diverge under the pressure of the agricultural crisis. John Kinnaird, vice president of NFUS, described the issue as "potentially divisive."

The Scottish Landowners Federation was less restrained, expressing "dismay" over the "very serious development" and noting that "this is the absolute opposite of everything which both SLF and NFUS Scotland have tried to achieve in negotiations for a new style of agricultural holding lease."

The provision in the bill for a broader "community right to buy," which forces landowners to give preferential consideration to collective bids from rural communities when land they live on is put on the

market, reflects a movement that has grown over the past several years in these areas. In 1993, 100 crofters in Assynt, in the north of the country, bought 21,000 acres. Since then, there have been around 40 community buyouts. A driving force behind these moves is the fact that Highland estates and islands have long been treated as investment opportunities and playgrounds for hunting and other country sports by the rich. Those living on the estates find themselves passed on from one landlord to the next, usually with little or no interest being taken for their livelihoods.

Up until now communities have had to pay top rate for the land. The Land Reform Bill will force landowners to take community bids at a market price set by a government commission. To make a successful bid, a commercial company has to be set up in the name of a community, and then has to provide a business plan. So far, such companies have been dominated by middle-class professionals and local business people.

The Land Reform Bill is due to become law in February. In the meantime discussions and public hearings continue.

# Detroit meat packers reject bosses' demands

Continued from front page

Workers Local 600, which has its headquarters across the street from the picket lines, has agreed to let strikers use its facilities. Members of the Steelworkers union and others have stopped by the picket line to find out about the strike.

A security outfit hired by the company has brought in guards from Ohio to patrol the areas around the plant and retail store and to videotape activities on the picket line. Similar union-busting companies have been known for their attempts to provoke confrontations with unionists and victimize them.

Dearborn Sausage supplies ham, sausages, bacon, and hot dogs to restaurants and retail grocery stores. It employs about 120 production workers.

Pickets report that there are about 50 workers currently working at the plant through a subcontractor. They are not members of the union and worked at the plant prior to the strike. Management is now trying to use these workers to get production going.

United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 876 represents some 23,000 workers throughout Michigan, primarily retail supermarket employees. Several meatpacking plants in the Detroit area are represented by the local. The local is supplementing weekly international union strike benefits to the Dearborn Sausage strikers.

In another challenge to the UFCW, food industry giant Tyson Foods announced January 11 that their IBP Foods plants in Detroit and Grand Rapids will be closed by April 1.

The company said production will be moved to nonunion plants in Oklahoma, Texas, and Nebraska, all "right-to-work" states.

The plant shutdown will put some 500 meat cutters out of work in Detroit and about another 600 in Grand Rapids.

The news stunned workers at the plant who were herded into the shipping depart-

ment to hear a brief announcement from a company official. The company has not offered severance pay or extensions on health insurance beyond April 1.

Osborne Hart is a member of UFCW Local 876 and works at Tyson's IBP Foods plant in Detroit.

# White House executive order bars 500 federal employees from unions

BY RÓGER CALERO

Seeking to increase government intervention in the unions, the Bush administration issued an executive order on January 7 that denies union representation to more than 500 employees at the U.S. attorneys' offices and several subdivisions of the Justice Department.

The "legislation recognizes that a unionized work force is not always appropriate for certain agencies or subdivisions of government," said White House spokesperson Ann Womack. Administration officials opined that "union contracts could restrict the ability of workers in the Justice Department to protect Americans and national security," reported the *New York Times*.

Steven Kreisberg of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees called the executive order a "very cynical use of the September 11 trag-

edy by an antiunion administration."

In justifying the measure, Womack pointed to the actions of previous administrations. On "national security" grounds, specific categories of workers had been excluded from legislation giving federal employees the right to join unions, she said.

A few days after issuing the order, Bush dismissed the seven members of a panel that represents federal employees in labor-management negotiations.

Bobby L. Harnage, national president of the American Federation of Government Employees, which represents some 600,000 federal employees in the United States and overseas, said the dismissal of the panel without any replacements "effectively shuts down the federal collective bargaining process." Federal workers, who are not allowed to strike, have used this bargaining panel for some 25 years to resolve labor disputes.

## From Pathfinder

### Che Guevara Talks to Young People

"We are attacked a great deal because of what we are. But we are attacked much, much more because we show to every nation of the Americas what it's possible to be. What's important for imperialism — much more than Cuba's nickel mines or sugar mills, or Venezuela's oil, or Mexico's cotton, or Chile's copper, or Argentina's cattle, or Paraguay's grasslands, or Brazil's coffee — is the totality of these raw materials upon which the monopolies feed." —Che Guevara, July 28, 1960 **\$15.95**

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# Washington sends troops to Philippines

Continued from front page

ippine defense minister Angelo Reyes. Reyes publicly disclosed January 17 in Manila that in a meeting between Bush and Philippine president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, the U.S. president told her, "We are offering American forces to fight in the Philippines." He said that in the White House. I was there."

Arroyo, mindful of potential mass opposition to the presence of U.S. troops engaged in combat with her countrymen, turned down the offer, saying, "We don't need American forces because our soldiers are good."

The Philippine president has pressed ahead with the invitation to the U.S. military in spite of initial divisions in her government and opposition threats to impeach her for violating the national constitution. The document includes an amendment, passed after the country's Senate voted in 1992 to close the U.S. military bases at Clark and Subic Bay, that bars the stationing of foreign troops in the country without the Senate's approval.

Arroyo has made collaboration with the U.S. military brass a hallmark of her 12-month-old administration. In November she visited Washington to accept a \$100 million package of military equipment and training from the Pentagon.

"In one deceptive and treasonous move, she has succeeded in making the Philippines a virtual extension of Afghanistan," said Francisco Tatad, a former senator, in reference to the coming troops. In spite of such statements, however, government officials announced on January 24 that the opposition had agreed to the exercises at a National Security Council meeting attended by Arroyo, cabinet members, former president Corazon Aquino, and selected members of Congress. Roilo Golez, the council's adviser, claimed the government would conduct the exercises with the "utmost transparency," limit the U.S. forces to a noncombat role, and launch a public information campaign "to address misconceptions."

**'Nothing like Vietnam,' says Powell**

Given the controversial character of its intervention, capitalist politicians in the United States have treaded carefully in their public statements. "We are not butting into their sovereignty," said Porter Goss, a Republican Congressman from Florida. Secretary of State Colin Powell insisted on January 17 that the operation "is nothing like Vietnam.... There is no intention for [the troops] to become active combatants. They are trainers."

The U.S. soldiers will be authorized to shoot if they are fired upon, however, and 200 will be allowed into the combat zone. They will be split into groups of 12 for every 400 Filipino troops, said officials in Manila.

The U.S. so-called trainers will join Filipino soldiers in the south of the country. The incursions by government forces into the area are presented as an offensive against the guerrillas of Abu Sayyaf. Although it originated as a split-off from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), and identifies itself as Muslim, Abu Sayyaf does not seek to provide political leadership to the peasants and workers of the region. Its best-known activity is that of holding local people and foreign nationals for ransom.

U.S. officials have claimed that the MILF, an armed organization calling for an independent state incorporating regions where the majority of the population is Muslim, has ties with "international terrorist organizations." MILF leaders, who are officially in peace negotiations with the government, have expressed unease about the offensive. "If there's fighting in the area, we have a base on Basilan that could be attacked," said a spokesperson, referring to an island stronghold of Abu Sayyaf.

Wealthy landlords on Basilan also maintain private armies of the type that collaborated with U.S.-backed government forces in the brutal repression of peasants and the New People's Army throughout the Philippines under the 1965-86 dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos.

While applauding the intervention, big-business newspapers in the United States, have warned of the long-standing suspicion towards government and U.S. forces throughout the Philippines, and especially in Mindanao and other southern islands. "Former military commanders and guerril-

las who have fought in the southern Philippines say the U.S. troops shouldn't underestimate the danger they face in Mindanao and Basilan," reported the January 17 *Wall Street Journal*. "While Abu Sayyaf troops are thought to number only in the hundreds, many residents of the Muslim south are seen as hostile to the Philippine armed forces."

A series of incidents during mid-January in Jolo, the largest town in the southern Island of Sulu, indicated the explosive tensions that are bubbling in the region. When police officers drawn from the ranks of former Muslim rebels killed three Philippine soldiers, local people celebrated the deaths. They explained that on the previous day the military had attacked a protest rally called to demand the release from custody of Muslim leader Nur Misuari, who has been charged with starting a rebellion.

## A history of national resistance

The U.S. forces are accompanying Philippine troops into a region that has long rebelled against the boot of colonial and imperialist oppression. Starting in the 16th century, the Spanish conquerors drove the Muslim Sultans and the people they ruled into the south of the country. They built forts on Mindanao to further their effort to subjugate the local people. Many neighborhoods in Zamboanga bear Catholic names

imposed by the Spanish.

When the rising U.S. imperialists defeated their Spanish rivals in the war of 1898, the Philippines "dropped into our laps," in the words of President William McKinley.

The U.S. victory was followed by a brutal war, beginning in 1899, to crush the Philippine independence struggle. In two years of fighting and three years of guerrilla warfare, the U.S. deployed 60,000 troops, of whom 4,300 were killed. In comparison, 379 were lost in the war with Spain. In pacifying the island of Luzon, said one U.S. general, 600,000 Filipinos were killed. Fighting was particularly bloody in the Muslim south.

U.S. domination was sealed with a 1905 treaty with Japan that acknowledged Tokyo's mastery over Korea and U.S. authority in the Philippines.

Up until World War II, when the country became a major battleground in the Pacific War, the Philippines remained a U.S. colony, in spite of near-unanimous calls for independence. During the war, peasants and workers organized a powerful local army, the Hukbalahaps, or "Huks" that fought both the Japanese invaders and local exploiters. The formal independence that was granted in the 1940s allowed for a "permanent" U.S. military presence, and involved U.S. mili-

tary and economic backing for a series of semicolonial regimes. The local capitalists and landlords profited from the relationship, and acted in fear of both the peasants, who have never ceased to demand land reform and the breakup of the massive *latifundias* or landed estates, and the growing working class.

## The martial law regime

Ferdinand Marcos, elected in 1965 on a "Philippines First" program of land reform and economic nationalism, reacted to swelling popular discontent by declaring martial law in 1972. Peasants and workers' leaders were hunted down by landlord armies and the Philippine military. An indication of the potential for revolutionary struggle by workers and peasants during this time was the fact that many were attracted to the Communist Party of the Philippines, an organization that took its political lead from the Maoist regime in China. The Stalinist organization was able to build up a substantial guerrilla army, and an influential role in the unions and among peasants in the countryside.

The CP's Stalinist methods and petty-bourgeois politics included seeking an alliance with a "progressive" wing of the bourgeoisie in the anti-Marcos struggle instead

Continued on Page 14

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

### CALIFORNIA

#### Los Angeles

**Malcolm X: The Man and His Ideas.** Speakers: Ana Ramirez, Young Socialists; others. Fri., Feb. 1, 7:30 p.m. 4229 S. Central Ave. Tel: (323) 233-9372.

#### San Francisco

**Why the U.S. Ruling Class Needs the Death Penalty and Why Working People Need to End It.** Speaker: Deborah Liatos, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 8, 7:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. 3926 Mission St., Tel: (415) 584-2135.

### FLORIDA

#### Miami

**Release the Detained Haitian Immigrants; Defend Haitian Sovereignty!** Speakers: Tony Jeanthenor, Veye Yo; Eric Simpson, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 1, 7:30 p.m. 8365 NE 2nd Ave. #206. Tel: (305) 751-7076.

### NEW JERSEY

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**The Cuban Revolution Today: Example for**

**Working People around the World.** Speaker: Mike Taber, Socialist Workers Party, traveled to Cuba in December. Fri. Jan. 25, 7:30 p.m. 506 Springfield Ave., 3rd Floor. Donation: \$4. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

### NEW YORK

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**Washington's Occupation of Afghanistan.** Fri., Jan. 25, 7:30 p.m. 372A 53rd St. (at 4th Ave.) Donation: \$5. (718) 567-8014.

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**The 1951 Waterfront Lockout in New Zealand. Fifty Years Ago, Workers Resisted Rulers' Drive to War and Austerity.** Featuring *Shattered Dreams*, film in tribute to waterside workers and their allies. Speaker: Patrick O'Neill, Militant correspondent. 545 8th Avenue 14th Floor. Donation: \$4. (212) 695-7358.

#### Upper Manhattan

**Eyewitness Report from Argentina.** Celebrate the Grand Opening of the Pathfinder Bookstore at Its New Location. Speaker: Martin Koppel,

editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*; Romina Green, leader of the Young Socialists, both just returned from Argentina. Fri., Jan. 25, 7:30 p.m. Dinner 6:30 p.m. 599 W. 187th Street, 2nd Floor. Donation: dinner \$5, program \$5. Tel: (212) 740-4611.

### AUSTRALIA

#### Sydney

**Celebrate 43 Years of the Cuban Revolution.** Speaker: Alasdair McDonald, Young Socialists. Sun., Feb. 3, 4:00 p.m. 1st floor, 3/281-3 Beamish St., Campsie. Donation: \$4. Tel: (02) 9718-0197.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Christchurch

**Europe vs. America. The Introduction of the Euro; Differences in Afghanistan: Signs of Increasing Tensions between the Imperialist Powers.** Fri., Feb. 1, 7:00 p.m. Gloucester Arcade, 129 Gloucester St. Suggested donation: \$3. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

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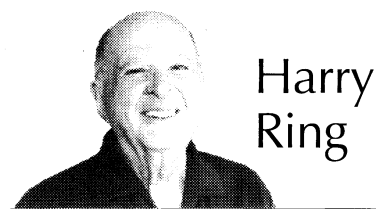
**Bully for them**—United Kingdom workers are “lazy,” according to pop singer Madonna. She’s vexed by what she sees as the slow progress

keep “lousy short hours, leave work at five o’clock, take holidays every other minute and demand four weeks’ paid vacation.”

lead smelter. Hundreds of residents are to be evacuated and a cleanup crew brought in. Dangerous lead levels have been found in the soil and streets, and inside homes and schools. The plant has been operating since the 1890s.

experts. For instance, the ones cited by *USA Today*: “Hiring discrimination continues to put African-Americans and Hispanics at a disadvantage, experts say.”

agency says it should be safe as long as the builders don’t dig into the underlying garbage.



Harry Ring

of the renovation of the \$10-million London town house she bought. According to gossip columnist Liz Smith, Madonna says the workers

**A worker dead? So what**—In Delaware City, Delaware, Motiva Enterprises, an oil refinery, was fined \$259,000 for failing to inspect a boiler that exploded last summer, killing boilermaker Jeff Davis. His body has yet to be recovered. The company will contest the fine.

**Deliberate speed**—Herculeum, a tiny town in Missouri, is the home of Doe Run, the country’s largest

**Remember Japan’s ‘lifetime’ jobs?**—“A record 1 million heads of household are now out of work in Japan, with statistics showing the number of jobless climbed again to the highest point in nearly half a century.”—*Daily Telegraph*, London.

**Indispensable**—We often wonder how we would manage without the

**How about vacant morgue slabs**—Tennessee officials warn that unless more prisons are built, nearly 5,000 prisoners will be without beds.

**Life jackets available**—Our atlas didn’t indicate what the body of water is, but offshore from Madison, Illinois, an entertainment dome is slated to be built on a 45-acre landfill. The state environmental

**A little privacy, cool**—A member of the Walton family—the Wal-Mart chain biggies—recently bought a \$20 million house in a spiffy area outside Los Angeles. Now she’s buying an adjacent \$6-million piece of property to avoid neighbors. There is a house on the property. But real estate sharks assure it’s a “tear down.”

**Never occurred to us**—“Enron proves a touchy topic for both parties.”—News headline.

## Workers in Atlanta protest cutbacks in bus service

BY NED MEASEL

ATLANTA—Thousands of people turned out at four public hearings in December to protest proposed cuts in bus service in the Atlanta metropolitan area. The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) proposed dropping 14 daily and 99 weekend bus routes. Monthly discounts for students would also be reduced.

MARTA officials said the cuts were needed to cover a \$12 million budget shortfall. Since the hearings, local government officials suddenly came up with a way to avoid the service cuts by shifting money from MARTA’s capital fund to its operating budget. This requires approval from the Georgia legislature. At the hearing held at MARTA’s headquarters, many people pointed to the large new office building as an example of the authority’s misplaced priorities.

MARTA officials tried to blame the September attack on the World Trade Center in New York for some of Atlanta’s transportation budget shortfall, claiming it brought on an economic decline resulting in less revenue from the sales tax they depend on. This was greeted with disbelief and outrage by those at the hearings.

Among the routes targeted to be cut are several of the “700 series” or “maid routes,” which hold a special significance for many working people. A recent article in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reported that these routes were created in 1971 as the result of work by the National Domestic Workers Union (NDWU). The organization sup-

ported domestic workers when they sought raises and better working conditions. Domestic workers at that time, almost exclusively Black women, averaged about \$8 to \$10 a day.

In 1969, Dorothy Bolden, along with other leaders of the NDWU, called for a boycott of MARTA’s predecessor, the private Atlanta Transit Co., when it proposed raising fares a nickel to 40 cents. They backed a referendum that created MARTA to replace the private company in 1971. The referendum won and bus service was expanded through the Black neighborhoods. Also won were more contracts with minority-owned businesses and a cut in fares to 15 cents for five years.

MARTA officials held the recent hearings in small rooms, preventing hundreds of people who showed up from getting in. Under these conditions promises that all would be heard only added insult to injury. Despite the chaotic conditions, people listened seriously as one after another of those testifying explained what the cuts would mean in terms of getting to work, school, health care appointments, stores, and cultural events. Statements from MARTA officials were greeted with jeers.

One of those in attendance, Ruby Green, who works at the Marshall’s distribution center and is a member of the Union of Needletrades Industrial and Textile Employees, said, “I work a weekend shift.... With the proposed cuts I couldn’t work my shift and my co-workers couldn’t work Saturday overtime. This is a question for our unions.”



Militant/Linda Joyce

Thousands turned out at public hearings in Atlanta to protest elimination of bus routes

Eleanor García, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate, campaigned along with supporters at the hearings by distributing a statement explaining that public transportation is a right, and demanding that no cuts be made to the bus service. The statement also called on the government to enact a massive public works program to upgrade

public transportation and other needed facilities, increase the minimum wage, and cancel the \$2 trillion debt imposed on semicolonial countries by Washington and other imperialist governments. García addressed the cuts and expanded on the socialist campaign’s demands at a Militant Labor Forum held January 4.

## ‘Rebel Army was people in uniform’

Continued from Page 8

Havana, where young women from the Escambray came to learn sewing and other skills. They were housed in the mansions abandoned by wealthy owners—some the former landlords of the peasant women. Later they went back to the Escambray to teach the same skills to others.

Plus we established what was called the “Escambray Plan” to develop agriculture in the region. Members of the LCB would help the peasants during the coffee harvests, for example.

Every officer was there with his unit. We were present in the battles, combing the area together with the troops, exchanging fire with the bandits. This is one of the things about our armed forces that allowed us to wipe out the bandits—the personal example of the commanding officers, who were always with their troops in combat.

Along these lines, the compañeros sometimes tell a story about me. I don’t remember it, so I don’t know if it’s true or not. One night, they say, I was asleep in camp. One of the compañeros returning from guard duty didn’t recognize who I was and woke me up, saying, “Hey, get me some food.” Or “Bring me some water to cook with.” Because the commanding officers were right there along with the rest of the men. You were just like everybody else. That’s how

the struggle against the bandits was.

The commander in chief himself was the first to set the example, on the front lines, firing at the bandits. This was an extremely dangerous time. The death of Fidel would have been very dangerous for the revolution. But as he would say, “We have to set the example.” That’s the way it is. And besides, Fidel is Fidel, always in the front lines of combat.

Like when there’s a hurricane. The commander heads right out there and no one can stop him.<sup>3</sup> That’s the way he is. We wish he wouldn’t do that, but we love him more for it. It’s the same with Raúl. The minister is our best teacher.

During the early part of this phase of the struggle to eliminate the bandits, these bands murdered many people—because, even though we had this structure set up, it really wasn’t operationally strong at first. There’d be a company of 100 men, let’s say. But since it had to cover such a vast territory, when the company went here, the bandits would hit you there; when you went there, they’d hit you here. They started burning down stores, murdering literacy brigadistas, and instilling fear among the teachers who were participating in the literacy campaign.

There were moments when we couldn’t do anything and that made us so angry. They’d attack some place and we’d arrive and comb the area, catching one or two of them. But the next day they’d be attacking somewhere else.

<sup>3</sup> Hurricane Flora slammed into eastern Cuba in October 1963, killing more than a thousand people, destroying 10,000 homes, and severely damaging agricultural production. In the midst of the hurricane, Fidel Castro went to the affected area and became directly involved in the rescue operation.

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS  
**THE MILITANT**  
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

February 4, 1977

NEW YORK—“Who were the women who died from back-alley abortions before the 1973 Supreme Court decision?” asked Dr. Kenneth Edelin. “By and large they were poor women; very often they were Black women.”

The 250 women and men participating in a teach-in here to “Defend a Woman’s Right to Choose” agreed. The January 22 meeting protested the Hyde amendment to withhold Medicaid abortions, the Supreme Court ruling attacking maternity benefits, and increase sterilization abuse.

Edelin is the Boston doctor who was convicted of manslaughter for performing a legal abortion. His conviction was overturned in December.

Describing the horrors of pre-1973 botched illegal abortions, he declared, “We must never let this happen again!”

All speakers agreed that the women’s movement and its supporters must come together to fight these attacks on women’s rights.

Greetings were read from feminists in Italy, France, and England. The New York meeting, in turn, sent a message to the National Tribunal on Abortion Rights scheduled for London on January 29.

Pat Wright, a day-care worker and former SWP congressional candidate, told the meeting, “Some women have been saying, ‘Don’t rock the boat. Give Carter a chance.’”

“Carter has had lots of chances. Let’s give ourselves a chance. Let’s rely on our own strength. We need to be out in the street showing that 81 percent of the American people support a woman’s right to choose abortion.”

**THE MILITANT**  
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE  
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

February 4, 1952

The great anti-imperialist movement that the Egyptian government has tried to keep under its moderate leadership burst out of official bounds on Saturday, Jan. 26. The people of Cairo, infuriated by the slaughter of Egyptian police in Ismailia by overwhelming British forces, engaged in tremendous anti-British and anti-U.S. riots.

Crowds vented their age-old hatred on all the symbols of imperialist domination. British, U.S. and French-owned banks, business agencies, movies, hotels, etc., were stormed by Egyptians and set afire. Gathering places of the arrogant colonialists, like Sheppard’s Hotel, were particular targets of this Egyptian outburst against foreign oppression. The revolutionary temper of the populace is shown in the fact that there was no looting or indiscriminate destruction of property. Only buildings connected with the foreign imperialists or night clubs, operating while Egyptian patriots were giving their lives in the Suez area, were touched.

The immediate cause of the Jan. 26 outburst was the sudden offensive launched by the British the day before. Before dawn British troops invaded the heart of the city of Ismailia outside the Canal Zone, surrounding Egyptian police barracks and the Governor’s mansion.

Though in a hopeless military position, the Egyptian police refused to surrender and held out for six hours. British artillery pounded the defenders and tanks crashed through the walls of buildings. Even then British soldiers had to take the flaming buildings room by room in hand-to-hand battle.

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# Defending workers' rights

This week the *Militant* received a welcome increase in the number of articles about students, teachers, and working people standing up and defending workers' rights. Reports came in from Florida to New Jersey, and from Colorado to Michigan about the battle to keep open the space to do politics, to be able to organize against government policy off the job, to be free from unwarranted search and seizure, and to defend other basic rights of working people.

The U.S. rulers accelerated their assault on workers' rights in the wake of the September 11 attacks, seeking to see how far they could go using their "war on terrorism" before running into opposition to their attacks.

But as more people like Rabih Haddad, Michael Italie, Sami Al-Arian, and Ian Harvey began organizing to oppose political firings and victimizations, others have been emboldened to do the same. The conduct of five Cuban revolutionaries framed-up in Florida on federal espionage and related charges is part of this response. The five, in face of massive police pressure and life sentences or the death penalty, remained in fighting spirit and gave political statements at their sentencing hearings condemning Washington's history of aggression against Cuba.

Winning support among students, unions, farm organizations, and others for these and other such fights is crucial to the future of the struggle against capitalist exploitation and oppression. Those who are stepping forward to defend their jobs and rights today are part of a political

response that can strengthen the unions for the very kind of attacks they will more and more face from the employers and the government.

And in some parts of the country civil liberties organizations, such as the ACLU in New Jersey, are helping to shed light on the undemocratic character of the federal government's roundup by demanding states and counties abide by their own laws and report on who is being kept behind prison bars and that requests for legal representation be respected.

As a lawyer for several detainees aptly said, the U.S. government is turning constitutional safeguards on their head: "First you are guilty, then you are a suspect, then you are released," he said of the experience of those he represents.

Washington has extended its treatment of prisoners in the United States to those they have captured in Afghanistan. With stories and pictures of hooded, shackled, man-handled men held in cages, they hope to inure workers and farmers to the kind of brutal treatment the U.S. rulers are capable of meting out.

With its usual imperial arrogance, Washington is carrying this out on Cuban soil, on a base illegally occupied for decades. That it would take the prisoners and cage them in open-air cells is a renewed affront to the sovereignty of Cuba and to revolutionary Cuba's stand opposing Washington's war against the people of Afghanistan.

# U.S. out of Colombia!

Working people should oppose Washington's intervention in Colombia, and demand an end to the massive military aid being poured into the region under the banner of fighting terrorism and drug trafficking.

The U.S. rulers' military presence in Latin America has nothing to do with these stated objectives. Rather, their military expansion throughout the northern part of South America is simply part of their preparations to confront the growing social instability in the area, fueled by the unpayable foreign debt, spiraling inflation, and massive unemployment.

As is the case at home, the U.S. imperialists know that the merciless drive of the capitalist market system to squeeze more out of workers and peasants in order to fill the coffers of the superwealthy bankers and bondholders cannot succeed without stepped-up police and military repression.

The capitalist rulers in Colombia have been emboldened to use their military more decisively, thanks to the arms, training, and logistical support they have received from Washington. Combined with paramilitary rightist squads that are used to terrorize sections of the rural population, the government of Colombia is seeking to reassert its authority over areas ceded to opposition guerrilla organizations over the past years.

Giving the military more muscle is also one reflection of the rulers' concern over the working class resistance that keeps arising in face of the economic crisis and the assault by the bosses on the standard of living and working conditions of workers and peasants. Such resistance includes protests by small coffee farmers and other grow-

ers last year that demanded government relief and cancellation of their debt; a strike of hundreds of thousands of education and health care workers against austerity measures; and actions by peasants demanding they be allowed to grow coca, a staple and cash crop in the area.

Seeking to deepen their involvement in the region, the U.S. rulers—as in the Philippines—are looking for opportunities to remove the thin line restricting U.S. military personnel from engaging in combat actions in their so-called wars on drug trafficking and terrorism. Both the Colombian regime and Washington are speaking more openly about using the military aid "to combat activities and organizations affecting national security," in the words of one Colombian minister. The latest military package announced by Washington includes more intelligence sharing against the guerrilla groups, and the training of a rapid reaction force to protect pipelines and other property of U.S. oil companies.

From Argentina to Colombia, the capitalist economic crisis and the system of imperialist exploitation and oppression is creating social instability and potential political explosions as workers and farmers seek to defend their class interests.

Workers and farmers in the United States can begin to forge an unbreakable alliance with their class brothers and sisters in the Southern Hemisphere by calling on Washington to withdraw its troops and end its flow of arms to the capitalist regimes there. At the same time, the demand for the cancellation of the foreign debt of the semi-colonial countries points in the direction of a common struggle against a common exploiter.

# 'Militant' names new business manager

BY GREG McCARTAN

The *Militant* announced this week that Jack Willey, who joined the staff in September, has been appointed the paper's business and circulation manager. Maurice Williams, who has carried those responsibilities for five years—spanning

## U.S. intervention in Philippines

Continued from Page 12

of organizing to lead workers and peasants to fight for political power. This left working people politically disoriented when, under the impact of massive street mobilizations, the imperialists and the capitalists in the Philippines decided Marcos had become a liability and shipped him off to the United States.

The capitalist presidents who have followed, from Corazon Aquino to Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, have succeeded, with U.S. backing, in stabilizing the situation, however temporarily. A degree of imperialist investment and industrial development has occurred, although the Philippines remains a poor semicolonial nation dependent upon imperialism and saddled with an unpayable foreign debt.

Washington is now collaborating with the Philippine rulers to try to take back some of this lost ground. A glimpse of the destabilizing effect of its initiative could be gained at a January protest led by students, opposing the U.S. intervention. The several dozen students, who gathered outside the presidential palace, were charged by police wielding batons.

nearly 10 subscription drives for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*—will continue as a staff writer.

Beginning with this issue, all invoices for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* will be sent to distributors via email, significantly cutting down the time and waste generated by paper copies. Distributors will receive their invoices the day the paper is shipped. The invoice will include the tracking number for the package. Willey is also working to establish a website where distributors can adjust their weekly bundle orders, and check on payments due and other account information.

Since joining the staff, Willey, 26, has spoken in several cities across the country about the efforts by socialist workers and young socialists to build a worldwide anti-imperialist youth movement and the need to build a proletarian party in the United States.

He also represented the Young Socialists at the December meeting of the World Federation of Democratic Youth in Athens, where youth groups discussed how to build on the accomplishments of the Algiers anti-imperialist festival last summer.



Business manager Jack Willey

# Professor fights planned dismissal

Continued from Page 5

claims the interview sparked hostile e-mails and death threats.

On September 27 USF president Judy Genshaft suspended Al-Arian "for his own safety." Then on October 8 she sent him a "final warning" letter in which she banned the tenured professor from setting foot on campus. The USF Board of Trustees held an "emergency meeting" December 19 after students and faculty had gone on winter break, and without permitting Al-Arian to answer the charges being made against him, and recommended that he be fired from his job. University Provost David Stamps then immediately issued a "Notice of Intent to Terminate Dr. Sami A. Al-Arian."

The first week of the new semester was dominated by debate over the university's blatant attack on academic freedom and civil liberties. The Faculty Senate overwhelmingly rejected a motion to endorse Genshaft's action, and the faculty union, the United Faculty of Florida, voted to fully back Al-Arian in this fight. The Coalition of Progressive Student Organizations opposed the firing and is preparing protests. Florida governor John Bush, in contrast to his claim to be a defender of academic freedom when he spoke on campus last summer, backed the effort to fire Al-Arian because "he continues to make very provocative statements."

In addition to Al-Arian and his attorney Robert McKee, speakers at the January 14 conference included representatives of a range of organizations supporting this fight: Roy Weatherford, president of the United Faculty of Florida at USF; Eric Vickers, of the American Muslim Alliance; Ray Busch, of the American Muslim Council; Mike Pheneger, of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in Tampa; Altaf Ali, of the Council on American Islamic Relations; Sarah Altantawi, of the Muslim Political Affairs Council; and David Jones, of the Hillsborough Organization for Progress and Equality (HOPE).

## 'Political discrimination'

Weatherford explained that the firing amounted to "political discrimination" with "trumped-up charges used as a pretext." Responding to Genshaft's claim that a drop in donations to the university necessitated the firing of Al-Arian, Weatherford emphasized that the union "will not sell our principles for an endowment," and is calling on the Florida Education Association, the National Education Association, and the American Federation of Teachers to give aid in this fight.

Vickers of the American Muslim Alliance said he flew into town for the press conference "to show support and solidarity" in the face of "the bigotry perpetrated against Sami Al-Arian and the entire Muslim community." Jones, speaking for HOPE, added that the firing of Al-Arian amounted to discrimination based on his Arab and Muslim background, and that he had "fallen victim to the good-old-boy network" that dominates politics and campus life. Vickers noted that he and the representatives of the largest Muslim organizations in the United States requested a meeting with USF president Genshaft, but that she had refused.

Attorney McKee distributed a letter in which he refuted the administration's arguments, and called on the Board of Trustees to hold a meeting at which Al-Arian could answer the charges against him. Board of Trustees Chairman Dick Beard rejected the proposal, telling the *Tampa Tribune*, "All we've done is make a recommendation. We've considered everything we need to consider."

In a prepared statement released to the media after the news conference, Genshaft said, "This is a unique case of how one person's activities outside the scope of his employment have resulted in harm to the legitimate interests of the university," and that she would soon make a final ruling.

Speaking for the Tampa ACLU, Pheneger pointed to the firing of Al-Arian as a violation of freedom of speech. "Speech is not very free," noted Pheneger, "if you are fired from your job the first time you use it." Sarah Altantawi of the Muslim Political Affairs Council linked the fight against this firing to the Palestinian cause. As a Palestinian, she said, she "comes from a country under occupation where my right to national sovereignty is denied." She explained that it is Al-Arian's commitment to his people's struggle for justice that makes him a target of the governor, the media, and the campus administration.

Al-Arian also spoke out against the brutal treatment of Mazzen Al-Najjar at the hands of government authorities. Al-Najjar was released from prison after being held for three-and-a-half years on suspicion of terrorism based on "secret evidence." Less than a year later the INS picked him up again and is threatening to deport him on charges of violating his visa. Al-Arian pointed out that Al-Najjar is kept in solitary confinement 23 hours a day, and "is subjected to humiliating conditions, including strip searches twice daily."

Supporters of the fight to stop the firing of Sami Al-Arian can contact the Tampa Bay Coalition for Justice and Peace at: 5901 E. 130th St., Tampa, FL 33617. Phone: (813) 300-9393. E-mail: tbcjp@yahoo.com.



# 'Unions are most important field of activity'

Printed below is an excerpt from *The Founding of the Socialist Workers Party*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for January. The item quoted is taken from the chapter titled "The trade union movement and the Socialist Workers Party." This is one of the resolutions adopted by the first national convention of the Socialist Workers Party held in Chicago Dec. 31, 1937—Jan. 3, 1938. Copyright © 1982 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

The most important single field of activity of the revolutionary proletarian party is the trade unions. Unless the party is deeply rooted in the basic economic organizations of the working class, and is inseparably associated with them in their daily struggles,

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

it can be, at best, a literary propagandist group but not a living revolutionary political party of the proletariat, able to lead the latter in the decisive struggle for power. The party that is divorced from the trade union movement and its daily work, is doomed to sterility and disintegration. This is especially true in the United States at the present time.

The outstanding characteristics of the working-class movement in the United States in the recent period are the enormous growth of trade union movements, which now embrace millions of workers never organized in the past; the development of the CIO as the movement of the workers in the basic key and mass-production industries, organized in industrial unions, as contrasted with the classic AFL form of craft unions; the violent conflict between the AFL and the CIO, and the recent trend towards the unification of the two bodies; and the expansion of the powers and role of the federal government as "mediator" in the conflict between the workers and the employers....

The party is the leader and guide of all the work of its members in the trade unions. Without party leadership and guidance, all

trade union work inevitably degenerates into opportunism and becomes a hindrance to revolutionary progress. In his mass work, the party member must not become a "mere trade unionist," or forget the need of imbuing the trade union movement with a revolutionary political class consciousness. However, in order effectively to pursue his work in the trade union movement the revolutionist must understand keenly the importance of approaching his fellow unionists and their problems not so much on the basis of his own consciousness and experience but rather on the basis of the level of consciousness and the degree of experience of the average trade unionist.

To approach the trade unionist, trade union problems, or even the trade union leadership in exactly the same manner in which one political organization deals with a rival political organization would result in self-isolation. The revolutionist must be conscious of his political role, but at the same time also of the fact that he is dealing, in the first place, with trade union problems and with workers who have not as yet developed beyond a trade union consciousness.

The excellent work which our comrades have already done in various unions shows the vast, untapped possibilities for participation in the class struggle and recruitment to the revolutionary party which are opened up before us by a serious and systematic



1937 sit-down strike at GM plant in Flint, Michigan. SWP founding conference said that "trade union movement embraces millions of workers never organized in the past."

work in the trade unions.

A serious approach to the trade unions and their problems, and not a hypercritical one, is the need; a responsible attitude toward the work of building the trade unions and our influence within them, and not a lightminded,

"experimental" one; an attitude of methodical, patient enlightenment of the politically undeveloped worker on the basis of his day-to-day experiences in the unions and in the class struggle, and not a supercilious, "high political" approach to him.

## Mushroom workers win first-ever union contract

BY HILDA CUZCO  
AND GEORGE CHALMERS

KENNETT SQUARE, Pennsylvania—Mushroom workers here scored a victory when Kaolin Farms signed a contract with their union, the Kaolin Mushroom Workers Union. The labor agreement is the first in the history of the industry in Pennsylvania.

After almost nine years of struggle, the union leadership met on January 3 at the offices of the Farmworker Support Committee to sign the agreement, which covers 350 workers at Kaolin Farms in Chester County. Union president Salvador López said the new contract improves conditions and addresses the need for respect from supervisors.

A decision of the Pennsylvania Supreme

Court last July upholding the right of mushroom workers to organize under the state Labor Relations Act set back the company's attempts to deny union recognition to the workers. In that suit, mushroom producer Vlastic Farms Inc., which had fired all their workers to break the union, had argued that mushroom workers were not covered by the state labor laws because mushroom picking is an agricultural activity.

The contract, which runs until August 2004, covers benefits, a wage increase, vacation pay, and health and safety issues. It includes a grievance and arbitration process with procedures for mandatory binding arbitration, and protection from layoffs out of seniority. It calls for the company to increase payment for 10 pounds of mushrooms picked to \$1.46 by 2004. López said that a worker can pick six 10-pound baskets per hour.

There are a total of 5,000 mushroom workers in the counties of Berks, Chester, and Lancaster, making up about 40 percent of mushroom production in the United States. Almost all are immigrants from Mexico and the majority are not represented by a union.

In 1993 mushroom workers at Kaolin struck for five weeks and voted to have a

union. Luis Tlaseca, former president of the union, along with 32 other unionists, was fired during the strike and blacklisted in the area. After a campaign against the company the state labor board ruled in 2000 that Tlaseca be reinstated. Owner Michael Pia relentlessly appealed to the courts to oppose union organizing until December 1998 when the state Supreme Court upheld the right of agricultural workers to a union and ordered Pia to start negotiations.

Pia, however, kept stalling the negotiations in hopes of demoralizing the workers, Tlaseca said in an earlier interview. The owner also expressed his contempt for older workers. "He would tell them, 'you are not good any more, get out of here,'" Tlaseca said.

"This is a good start," said López. "After the big strike in April 1993 mushroom workers saw improvements in the working conditions, such as accessible restrooms, a place to eat your food as opposed to the hallways, and there is a big bottle for drinking water installed now. But there were still more things to deal with such as paid vacations, fair treatment to everybody without favoritism, salaries, which this contract allows us to do now and in the future for others too."

## LETTERS

### Read 'Socialism on Trial'

I have just reread James P. Cannon's book *Socialism on Trial* and would like to recommend it to readers of the *Militant*. The book documents the trial of the eighteen leaders of the Socialist Workers Party for political opposition to Washington's entry into WWII.

I found the quotes of Mr. Cannon's testimony most relevant today with the United States again at war. He does a good job of outlining the necessary tasks of propagandizing and agitating against the war drive.

Gary Willhite  
Santee, California

### Declining capitalist world

By now you should have received my \$15 for the continuing of my subscription.

I really rely on the *Militant*. I've been without a TV and the so-called "main newspapers" now for over eight years. But guess what? Many of the TV and main paper guys come to me for the truth about what's really going on behind the scenes of the declining capitalist world.

They suspect that they are being lied to by the main media.

B.Q.  
Collegeville, Pennsylvania

### Opposition to U.S. war

About 100 people attended a meeting in Fremont, California, December 22 on the U.S. war in Afghanistan. The meeting, called "Afghanistan Uncensored," was spon-

sored by the Afghan Muslim Association (AMA), and featured a panel of speakers who presented their opinions for and against the imperialist assault and Washington's attacks on workers' rights.

Fremont is home to the largest Afghan community in the United States. Several recent actions there have backed the exiled monarch Mohammed Zahir Shah or the Northern Alliance. But as the Afghan civilian casualty count grows, and more immigrants from the Middle East are targeted by the U.S. government here, fissures in this sentiment have appeared.

One speaker said what is happening today can be traced back to the 1996 antiterrorism legislation signed by then-president William Clinton. Another added: "People need to be outraged at the attacks on civil liberties. Now is the time to stand up and defend them."

Agha Saeed of the American Muslim Alliance had earlier protested to a local newspaper about the number of Fremont residents, many of whom are U.S. citizens, who have been approached by the FBI.

Bill Kalman  
San Francisco, California

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

## January BOOKS OF THE MONTH

★ ★ ★ ★ Pathfinder Readers Club SPECIALS

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### The Founding of the Socialist Workers Party

JAMES P. CANNON AND OTHERS

At conventions and leadership meetings in 1938-39, revolutionists in the U.S. codified 20 years of experience in building a communist party. Taking the name Socialist Workers Party, they reaffirmed the Marxist approach in the fight against the coming imperialist war, the spread of fascism across Europe, and attacks by the bosses at home. \$24.95, special price: \$19.00

### Nueva Internacional no. 1

❖ Los cañonazos iniciales de la tercera guerra mundial: el ataque de Washington contra Iraq JACK BARNES ❖ Una política comunista tanto para tiempos de guerra como para tiempos de paz MARY-ALICE WATERS ❖ Lecciones de la guerra Iran-Iraq SAMAD SHARIF. \$13.00, special price: \$11.00

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The Victory in the Socialist Workers Party Suit against Government Spying

EDITED BY MARGARET JAYKO

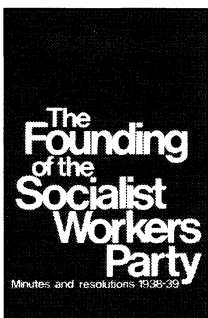
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Why Washington's 'Cold War' against Cuba Doesn't End

FIDEL CASTRO AND CHE GUEVARA

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## Land conflict deepens in Scotland

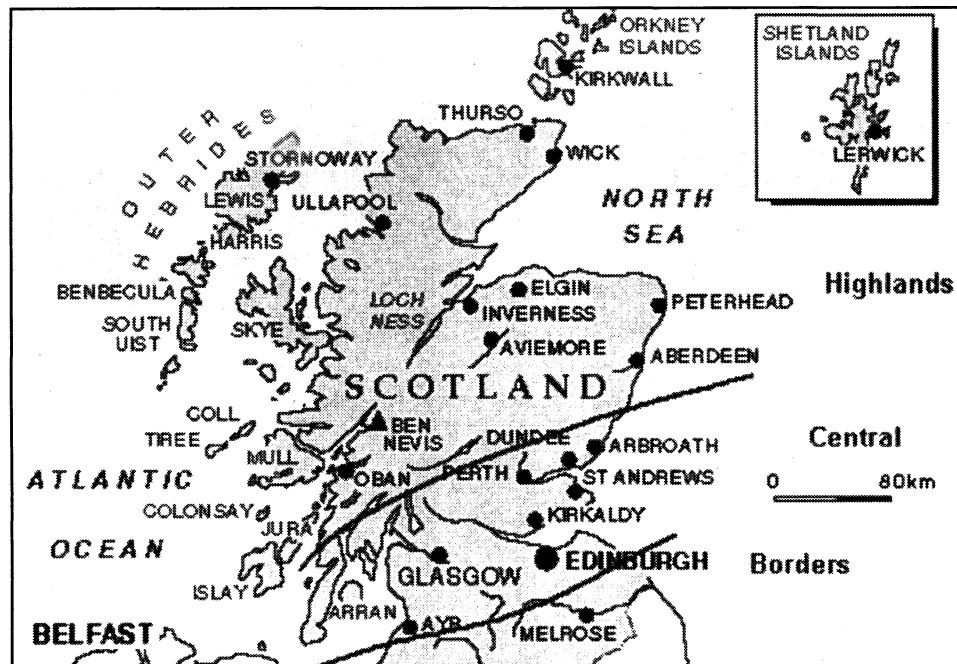
BY ANNE MACDONALD

EDINBURGH, Scotland—Debate is growing here over the Land Reform Bill, which was introduced in the Scottish Parliament last November. Support for measures to reform the archaic land ownership system runs deep because nearly all the land in the country is concentrated in the hands of a tiny number of wealthy families.

The bill covers three areas—the right of crofting communities (small farmers) to force their landlord to sell crofters the land that they work along with associated common grazing land; broader rights for rural communities to buy the island or other land they live on; and legal protection for public access to land.

Land reform was one of the first acts the Scottish Parliament committed itself to when it was formed in 1999. The pattern of land ownership has changed little in the last two centuries and the landowning class remains a powerful force in the country. In 1872 for example, 1,758 people each owned estates of more than 1,000 acres. By 1999 only 1,252 people owned estates of that size. They own 66 percent of all private rural land in the country, or 57 percent of the total land. Of those landlords, 343 people own half of all private land. This includes the “Crown estates”—the private property of the queen, Elizabeth Windsor, who owns more than 95,000 acres of the country.

The land question is deeply tied into the national oppression of Scotland. The ancestors of many of the large landowners of today had received money and titles in exchange for surrendering Scotland’s independence by voting for the union with England.



London, unable to defeat Scotland, forced through the union of the two countries in 1707 by making concessions to sections of the Scottish ruling classes, in particular the landlords. As a result, class relations in the countryside here have remained more or less frozen for the last 300 years.

The rising sentiment against the national oppression of Scotland has helped push this question to the fore today.

While organizations like the Scottish Landowners Federation and the Conservative Party oppose the entire bill, the most contentious piece is the proposal to give

crofting communities the right to buy the land they work, whether the landowner wishes to sell it or not. Crofting was introduced in Scotland around the start of the 19th century. At that time a huge percentage of the rural population was driven off the land through force and violence.

### Highland Clearances

Karl Marx, writing in *Capital*, describes how the Duchess of Sutherland had the county’s inhabitants “systematically hunted and rooted out. All their villages were destroyed and burnt, all their fields turned into

pasture. British soldiers enforced this mass of evictions, and came to blows with the inhabitants. One old woman was burnt to death in the flames of the hut she refused to leave. It was in this manner that this fine lady appropriated 794,000 acres of land that had belonged to the clan from time immemorial.”

These Highland Clearances drove most Highlanders into the new factories and mills of the industrial cities, or onto the “death boats” bound for the United States, Canada, and elsewhere. The clearances made way for large sheep farms and later deer on the big estates, which were much more profitable than other kinds of farming because of the terrain.

At a certain point, however, the landowners realized they would have no labor left in the Highlands and Islands to work on their own estates and in rural industries like kelping (seaweed processing) and fishing. So they rented out small pieces of land that would not provide enough to live on, thereby creating a seasonal labor force that could be left to its own devices when it was not needed.

Over the years crofters have carried out vigorous fights to gain security of tenure on the land they work, including a 13-year land war at the end of the 19th century, that culminated in the 1886 Crofters Act.

Today 33,000 people live and work on 17,700 crofts, concentrated in the five “crofting counties” in the West Highlands and the Islands. These crofts total about one third of all agricultural holdings in Scotland. Some 3,500 crofts are owner-occupied; the rest are tenanted. The average croft size is 12.3 acres, so most crofters supplement their earnings from other sources such as fishing, aquaculture, or tourism.

Since 1976, individual crofters have had the right to buy their own croft, at a price of 15 times the annual rent. Under the new legislation crofting communities can buy whole areas of crofting land and associated common land such as grazings.

### ‘A change in attitude needed’

In a statement, the Scottish Crofting Foundation, the main crofters organization, “wholeheartedly welcomed” the publication of the bill, stating, “we are confident that the bill will actually encourage the sale of crofting land to tenants by landowners.... It will also send a signal to the detached absentee landowners that a change in attitude

Continued on Page 11

## Steelworkers fired in Quebec after walkout

BY YANNICK DUGUAY AND SYLVIE CHARBIN

VARENNES, Quebec—On November 6, some 180 workers spontaneously walked out at Mométal, a structural steel fabrication plant located 25 miles from Montreal. The strike began after workers learned that their union president, Mariano Ariete, had been suspended without pay for his reaction to being publicly insulted by another worker. The strikers are members of the Metallurgy Federation of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN).

The following day, lawyers from Mométal obtained a Superior Court injunction ordering workers back on the job. At a membership meeting convened that day, striking workers voted by a margin of 98 percent to remain on strike. On November 9, contempt of court charges were laid against the entire union executive and a union counselor.

Four days later the company turned the suspension against Ariete into a firing and suspended for two to three months seven other members of the union executive, as well as another union member. By the end of the month, after the employer sent letters threatening to dismiss those who refused to go back to work, all the remaining 128 strikers were fired.

Since the beginning of December, two court injunctions have been issued, limiting pickets to two workers per gate. Although strikers have been respecting the terms of the injunction at the gates themselves, dozens of other workers were gathered in smaller groups in between the gates and at the picket trailer across the street.

Ariete explained that picketing is organized daily in six-hour shifts from 6:00 a.m. until midnight, with two workers watching the gates every night. Union members each receive Can\$200 a week in strike pay, part of which is a loan to be repaid once the strike is settled (Can\$1 = \$US 62 cents).

### The 1999–2000 strike

In October 1999, the union went on strike to force the company to grant wage increases by job classification, to post job

openings, and to respect seniority rights. After seven and half months on strike, the union made significant gains on all these demands. As Ariete puts it, “It was the employer’s stubbornness [in that strike] that forged the unity of the union.”

Since they returned to work in June 2000, the workers have been provoked repeatedly by Joseph Cicarelli, the plant vice president and the owner’s son, as well as several foremen. Sixty-two union grievances, over mostly job postings and classifications, attest to the fact that the company has vio-

lated the union contract on several occasions.

Bosses have arbitrarily granted better paying jobs to workers who crossed the picket lines during the last strike. It was one of these former scabs who provoked Ariete, leading to his suspension and eventual firing.

According to union vice president Bruno Benzahra, “Bosses have repeatedly imposed disciplinary measures against former strikers, but not against former scabs. Dangerous working conditions,” added Benzahra, Continued on Page 4

## Letter to editor opposing New Zealand’s special forces leads to interrogation by cops

BY CHRISTINE BERESFORD

WELLINGTON, New Zealand—Tahir Ali received an unpleasant surprise after *The Evening Post* printed his letter suggesting that New Zealand’s SAS (Special Air Service) be disbanded. Two policemen turned up at his home on December 27, the day the letter was published, and one returned the following day to question him.

Ali told the *Post* that he was quizzed about previous letters to the editor that he had written, asked for his e-mail address, and for some “very sensitive information about my family...where I was from and how long I’d been in New Zealand.” Ali was born in Fiji and has lived in New Zealand since 1968.

In the course of the police interview, Ali said, the cop told him that they “investigated anyone who expressed an opinion against the government.”

The police have refused to comment on the case, saying they’re “working on a range of current inquiries.” In response, Ali wrote to the paper, “Kaye Calder, the police spokesperson, is grossly incorrect. My interview by a detective was not helping an inquiry. Unfortunately, I was the inquiry.” He added, “If anyone from this time onward is critical of the armed forces in New Zealand, what’s next—unconstitutional military courts and detainments like the U.S.?”

The Green Party and the Council for Civil Liberties have released statements opposing this attack on Ali’s right to publicly express his views. *The Evening Post* editorialized that “not since the extreme climate of repression during the 1951 waterfront dispute have New Zealanders had police knocking on the door simply because they expressed reasonable views that they were entitled to hold. Even if their views were unreasonable, they should be free to express them without interference or harassment.”

In another move, police launched a huge armed operation centered around the participation of U.S. golfer Tiger Woods in a tournament here. The justification used for this was a cyanide-laced letter allegedly sent to the U.S. embassy in Wellington. The letter threatened the “New Zealand Golf Open and Israelis,” according to the *Dominion* newspaper, published in Wellington. “Operation Links” involved 400 cops, amounting to 6 percent of the national police force, who patrolled the golf course, searched nearby railway lines, tunnels, and trains, and harassed local residents. A number of stories of individuals subjected to heavy-handed police actions appeared in local newspapers.

Meanwhile, Auckland’s daily newspaper, the *New Zealand Herald*, has been branding New Zealand residents who are support-

ers of independence for Tamils in Sri Lanka as backers of terrorism. Two full pages of its January 12 edition were devoted to an “investigation” of fund-raising the paper claims has been organized in this country for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (Tamil Tigers). “Terrorist banker’s secret NZ visit,” was the title of one of these featured articles.

Quoting the statement of the president of the New Zealand Tamil Society, George Arulantham, that “the community here supports the Tigers...but only by public marches and statements, not with funds,” the *Herald*’s editors called for such lawful political activity to be banned. The Tigers, they wrote, “are a terrorist group and any form of financial or organizational support for them from this country should be a criminal offense.”

The government is expected to pass new “anti-terrorism” laws in the next months, which would outlaw fund-raising for named organizations deemed to be terrorist. The *Herald* stated that “one of the first groups to be affected, for reasons outlined in a *Weekend Herald* investigation, could be the Tamil community here.”

Janet Edwards in Auckland contributed to this article.